

THE  
True Time of Keeping  
St. MATTHIAS'S-DAY  
I N  
LEAP-YEARS.

Shewing, That it is to be kept on the  
24<sup>th</sup>, and not on the 25<sup>th</sup> of *February*,  
as some *Almanacks* place it.

Wherein are inserted,

- I. Dr. *Wallis's* Letter to Bishop *Fell*, on this  
Subject, *A. D.* 1684. printed from his  
original Manuscript.
- II. Arch-Bishop *Sancroft's* Order, sent to  
the Clergy of his Province, on this  
Point, *A. D.* 1684.
- III. Collections out of *Accounts of Time*,  
shewing the ancient Usage of celebra-  
ting this Festival, and the Manner of  
*Intercalating in Bissextile or Leap-Years.*

L O N D O N,

Printed for *J. Downing* in *Bartholomew-Close* near  
*West-Smithfield*, *J. Knapton*, *J. Wyat*, *H. Clements*,  
& *J. Holland* in *St. Paul's-Church-Yard*, *J. Bowyer*  
in *Ludgate-street*, *D. Brown* without *Temple-Bar*,  
*J. Fox* in *Westminster-Hall*, & *G. Strahan* in *Cornhill*, 1712.

Price Six Pence.

THE  
True Time of Keeping  
St. Matthias's Day  
1741  
LEAP-YEARS

Showing, That it is to be kept on the  
24th, and not on the 25th of February  
as some otherwise place it.

When printed  
By J. W. Bishop, on the  
24th of Feb. D. 1741, printed from his  
original Manuscript.



By Arch-Bishop Swinburn's Order, sent to  
the Clergy of his Province, on this  
Fourth of Feb. 1682.

The Collection out of the Treasury of the  
Church, for the support of the College of  
the said Bishop, and the Minister of  
the said Church, in the said or Leap-Year.

Printed by J. W. Bishop, on the  
24th of Feb. D. 1741, printed from his  
original Manuscript.



## The PREFACE.

**T**HE Two following Treatises were sometime since printed separately, but very few of the latter were dispers'd; because it was the Advice of some Friends, that I should consider this Point more fully before I made it publick, since it oppos'd the Judgment of so considerable a Person as Dr. Wallis.

Since this, I have shewn them to several Persons well skill'd in this Sort of Learning, who have concurr'd with me, that, according to the Calendar in our present Book of Common-Prayer, this Festival cannot now be kept on the 25th, as antiently, and that the Revisers thereof in 1661 did Intend, that it should from that Time be kept on the 24th, as well in Leap-Years as in Common Years; because they added a 29th Day to February, appointed Lessons for it as for other Days, and left out the old Rubrick just before the Table of proper Lessons, viz. When the Years of our Lord may be divided into four even Parts, which is every fourth Year, then the Sunday-Letter leapeth, and that Year the Psalms and Lessons which serve for the 23d Day of February, shall be read a.

gain the Day following, except it be *Sunday*, which hath proper Lessons of the Old Testament appointed in the Table serving to that Purpose: *And there is no Doubt to be made, but that this was their Intent; because Archbishop Sancroft, who was one of them, did so declare in the Order which he publish'd on this Point in the Year 1684, notwithstanding what Dr. Wallis is pleas'd to suggest to the contrary (1)*

*These Revisers have no where, so far as I can find, lest their Reasons for making this Change; but I humbly conceive they were either all, or some of these following Ones, viz, First, Because they might be of Opinion, that this Feast was First kept on the 24th, as seems to be intimated by the Testimony of Micrologus (2) who flourish'd above 100 Years before Durandus, who, as far as I can find, was the first that made mention of the old Verses:*

*Bissexturn sextæ Martis tenuere Calendæ;  
Posteriore Die celebrantur Festa Mathia.*

*Secondly, To prevent for the future all Disputes concerning the Intercalary Day, as happen'd between the Compilers of King Ed-*

---

(1) See the First Conference, p. 13; &c. (2) See the Collections at the End of the Second Conference, p. 1.

# The PREFACE. iii

ward VI. and Queen Elizabeth's Books, (1.)  
 Thirdly, To make it more correspondent with the  
**Table of Moveable and Immoveable**  
**Feasts at the End of the Calendar**, which  
 places it amongst the Immoveable Feasts;  
 And Fourthly, and more especially, that they  
 might hereby render the Performance of divine  
 Worship on this Feast in Leap Years more  
 easie and intelligible to the People, especially  
 to such as were piously accustomed to read  
 the holy Scriptures in Private, in that Order  
 and Method which the Church has appointed  
 them to be read in Publick.

These Reasons are, I conceive, sufficient to  
 authorize this Alteration, so that we need not  
 desire our Superiours to make another Change,  
 and restore the Intricate Usage of keeping  
 this Festival on the 25th, as it is observ'd  
 in the Church of Rome: The Act of Uni-  
 formity, by which the present Book of  
 Common Prayer, & consequently the Ca-  
 lendar therein is established, clearly enjoining  
 the Uniform Observance thereof on the 24th,  
 as well in Leap Years as in Common Years.

And since Arch-Bishop Sancroft thought  
 this a Matter of so great Moment, as to send  
 an Order about it to all the Clergy of his  
 Province; and Dr. Wallis not only to write

---

(1) See the Second Conference, p. 4, 5, 6.

so elaborate a Letter about it to so considerable a Person as Bishop Fell, but also to lodge 3 Copies thereof in 3 several Places, in order to be consulted when the Calendar should come to be review'd: It is humbly submitted to the Judgment of our Superiours, whether it may not be proper, that some publick Direction be given for this Purpose, since the Almanack-makers (whose Direction alone in this Case is generally observed) have almost every Leap-Year since 1661, differed in the Placing this Feast.

However, this Alteration in the Calendar does not, I conceive, at all affect our Civil Account; because the Letter J<sup>h</sup> ought still to be doubled at February 24th and 25th (tho' the Almanack-Makers have not constantly observ'd it) so that the old Statute of 21 Hen. 3. Anno Dom. 1236, de Anno Bissextill, declaring, that the 24th and 25th of February in Leap-Years are to be accounted but for one Day, (1) is still in as full Force as ever.

I have put at the End of the Second Conference, by way of Appendix, several Collections out of Breviaries, Missals, and Accounts of Time, to shew the ancient Usage

---

(1.) See this Statute in the Preface to the First Conference.



of keeping this Festival, and Manner of Intercalating in Leap-Years; more of which Nature may be seen in Newton's *Cosmographia*, &c. 8° 1679. Part 2. p. 313. Petavius de *Doctrina Temporum*, Fol. Vol. 1. l. 4. cap. 2. Sigonii *Calendarium Romanum* ap. Auctores *Linguae Latinae*, 4° 1585. Gassendi *Institutio Astronomica*, cap. 26. *Calendarium Gregorianum perpetuum*, 12° Paris 1583. Macrobi's *Saturnalia Lib. 1*. Cary's *Chronological Account of ancient Time*, Fol. 1677. Book 1. c. 8. and 11. De *Quæstis per Epistolam*, Libri 3. Aldi Manutii Pauli, F. Aldi N. 8° Venet. 1576. cap. 3. De *Ratione interkalandi*. Luyr's *Institutio Astronomica*, 4° Trajecti ad Rhenum, 1689, cap. 11. *Clavis Calendaria: or the Liturgy Calendar of the Church of England* by W. C. 8° 1700. Sect. 1 & 7. Sir George Wharton's *Works* 8° 1683, p. 74. Ductor *Historicus*, 2d Edit. 8° 1705, l. 1. Tirini *Chronicon sacrum*, c. 44. before his *Comment in S. S. Scripturam* Fol. Lugd. 1674. Crusius de *Epochis* 12° Basil. 1578.

I have nothing more to add, but to apologize for handling this Subject, (which does not much affect our Dissenters, tho' sometimes urg'd by them as an Instance of the Disformity of our Church, notwithstanding the Act of Uniformity, but is a Controversie between Church Men only) by Way of Con-



Conference between a Churchman and Dissenter, which I have done, partly to make it the more correspondent with The Rule for Finding Easter in the Book of Common-Prayer, Explain'd and Vindicated, which is so handled, and will in a little Time be publish'd, to which it was design'd as an Appendix, and at First to have ended with p. 7. of the First Conference. And I hope the Enlargement of it so much beyond my first Intention will be pardon'd, by reason Archbishop Sancroft's Order, and the many curious Observations in Dr. Wallis's Letter, are perhaps hereby retriev'd from a perpetual Oblivion, which they would otherwise have lain in; not to mention that it might probably be a Means of putting an End to that Difformity which has happen'd in the Church on this Account, and adjust Disputes that might arise on this Occasion in the Two Universities, and other Places where Sermons are wont to be preach'd on Holy-Days, especially, when the 24th of February happens to fall, (as it does this Leap Year) on a Sunday.

London, Feb. 12.

1711, 12.

---

E R R A T A.

IN the Preface to the First Conference, p. 2. l. 4. for may, read Day, and l. 15. for Year, read Day; And in the Preface to the Second Conference, p. 1. l. 17. for as well in Common Years as in Leap Years, read, as well in Leap Years as in Common Years.

THE  
True Time of Keeping  
**St. Matthias's - Day**  
IN  
**LEAP-TEARS:**

Shewn in a  
FAMILIAR CONFERENCE  
Between a  
*Church-man and a Dissenter.*

Wherein is Inserted Dr. *Wallis's* Letter  
to Bp. *Fell*, written on that Subject  
*A.D. 1684.* Never Printed before.

---

*Biſſextum, Sextæ Martis, tenuere, Calendæ:  
Poſteriore Die, Celebrantur Feſta Mathiæ.*

---

OXFORD:

Printed by L.L. 1711. And are to be Sold by *Joſeph  
Downing* in *Bartholomew-Cloſe*, *J. Knapton*, *J. Wyat*,  
*J. Bonwick*, *H. Clements*, *W. Carter*, and *W. Meadows*,  
Bookſellers in *St. Paul's Church-Yard*, LONDON.

---

Price Three-Pence, or 20 s. per Hundred.

THE

True Time of Keeping

St. Nicholas - Day

IN

THE YEAR

1800

HANNAH K. O'NEILL

Author

Chapman & Co. New York

When first the world was new

And all the world was young

And all the world was gay

And all the world was bright

And all the world was true

And all the world was good

And all the world was kind

And all the world was wise

And all the world was brave

And all the world was strong

que  
lev  
Fi  
th  
con  
co  
in  
ly  
to

Pu  
ca  
fo

T  
T

o  
a

## The PREFACE.

**T**HE following *Appendix*, on Account of Dr. *Wallis's Letter*, being *First* work'd off, at the Request of a Particular Friend, and upon several other *Considerations*, is now *First* offered to the Publick; and I hope the *Candid Readers* will pardon the *Inconsistency* thereof; since The *Tract*, concerning the Rule to find out Easter in the Book of Common-Prayer, will shortly follow; then when this is Tack'd to that, the *Inconsistency* will cease.

I take this Occasion of giving the Publick the following *Statute* here, because there was no Convenient Room for it in the *Appendix*.

Out of *Keble's Statutes*, fol. 81. p. 79.

The Statute *de Anno Bissextili*, made at *Westminster*, An. 21. H. 3. & A.D. 1236.

The Day of the *Leap Year*, and the Day before, shall be holden for One Day.

Bract. 359. The King unto his Justices of the Bench, greeting: Know ye, that where within our Realm of England it was  
doubted



doubted of the year and day that were wont to be assigned unto such persons being impleaded, when and from what day of the year going before unto another may of the year following, the year and day in the Leap-year ought to be taken and reckoned how long it was.

II. *We therefore, willing that a Conformity be observed in this behalf every where within our Realm, and to avoid all danger from such as be in Plea, have provided, and by the Counsell of our faithfull Subjects, have ordained, that to take away from henceforth all doubt and ambiguity that might arise hereupon, the day encreasing in the Leap-Tear shall be accounted for one year, so that because of that day none shall be prejudiced that is impleaded, but it shall be taken and reckoned of the same Month wherein it groweth, and that day, and the day next going before, shall be accounted for one day. And therefore we do command you, that from henceforth you do cause this to be published afore you, and be observed. Witness my self at Westminster, &c.*

I intended likewise to have annex'd to it *A. Bp. Sancroft's* Paper which seems to have Occasion'd the writing of *Dr. Wallis's* Letter, but it not being yet come to my Hands, I must defer the Publication of it till another Opportunity.



AN

# APPENDIX

Concerning

*St. Matthias's Day.*

**D.** **HOLD:** I had almost forgot another Occasion of my waiting on You: But perhaps it will detain You too long.

**C.** No, No: Pray Sit down again, and e'en tell me now what You had further to say.

**D.** It is concerning the true Time of keeping *St. Matthias's Day* in *Leap-Years*: You may remember probably, that in the Year 1684, when all the *Almanacks*, except the *Oxford* one, plac'd *St. Matthias's Day*, on *Feb. 25.* *Arch-Bp. Sancroft* publish'd a Paper on that Subject, declaring, that it shou'd be kept on *Feb. 24.* since which, as far as I can find, all the *Almanacks*, except the *Oxford* one, have plac'd it in *Leap-Years* on *Feb. 24.*

**C.** Neighbour, I doubt not but I shall set you right there too: for I have several

A

Things

Things by me on this Subject, and particularly a long Letter of the late celebrated *Dr. Wallis*, written on the Occasion of that Paper of *Arch-Bp. Sancroft's*, to the learned *Bp. Fell*, which (If You will have but the Patience,) I will read to You.

*D.* By and By, If You please Neighbour, because I have not said yet all I would, on this Point: I say, besides the Disturbance it occasion'd in the Year 1684, It happen'd, as I well remember, the last *Leap-Year*, 1708, that *St. Matthias's Day* being plac'd in the *Oxford Almanack* at *Feb 25*, and I think, in all the others, for that Year, at *Feb 24*; that *Feast* was *bid*, and *kept* on different Days, viz. at some Places, on *Tuesday* the 24th, according to the *Common Almanacks*, and at others, on *Wednesday* the 25th, according to the *Oxford Almanack*. And this Confusion was more remarkable in the Cities of *London* and *Westminster*.

*C.* Is this all You have to say on this Point?

*D.* Why? Is not that enough? I think, not to mention any Thing else, This Confusion occasioned by the Silence of your *Common-Prayer-Book* and *Canons* as to this material Point, sufficiently shews, that your *Church* needs a further *Reformation*.

*C.* Neighbour, this Confusion had not happen'd,

happen'd, had but Pains been taken to have search'd into the Customs of the *ancient Church* as to this Particular, where it would have been clearly found, that it should have been kept in *Leap-Years* always on *Feb. 25* : But the learned Dr. *Nichols* has so fully shewn this now, that I believe the like Confusion will never happen again.

D. What is it, pray, that He has said to prevent it?

C. Let me read then a little to You of what He offers on this Subject.

D. With all my Heart.

C. In his late *Excellent Comment on the Book of Common-Prayer*, after his Notes on the Order *How the Psalter is appointed to be read* : He proceeds to the Order *How the Rest of Holy Scripture is appointed to be read* : and gives us, amongst the *Various Readings*, these Two relating to this Point :

The *first* of which is taken out of *Queen Elizabeth's Common-Prayer-Book*, which the Doctor distinguishes by this mark, *O.C.P.* *When the Years of our Lord may be divided into Four even Parts, which is every fourth Year, then the Sunday Letter leapeth, and that Year the Psalms and Lessons, which serve for the 23d day of February, shall be read again the Day following ; except it be Sunday, which hath proper Lessons of*

*the Old Testament appointed in the Table serving to that Purpose. The other is taken out of the 1st and 2d Book of Edw. VI. and is in these Words. This is also to be noted concerning Leap-Year, that the 25th of Feb. which in Leap-Year is counted for Two Days, alter neither Psalm nor Lesson, but the same Psalms and Lessons which he said the first day, shall also serve for the second.*

After this last *Various Reading* the Dr. adds this Note: *By comparing these Two old Rubricks together we may learn upon what Day in the Leap-Year, St. Matthias's Day, is to be kept. Our present Common-Prayer-Book is perfectly Silent of this matter, only placing St. Matthias upon the 24th of Feb. as all the ancient Calendars did: But according to the old Roman Computation, the Intercalary Day coming in after the 23d, and before the 25th Day of Feb. thereby making Two 24th Days, or Two Sexto Calendas (from whence such Year had the Name of Bissextile) the Query is, which of the two 24th Days is to be St. Matthias's, whether the first 24th, the usual Day it falls upon in Common Years, or the Second 24th, which is in Reality the 25th. For when there are Two 24ths, the Second of these must be the 25th: Now we shall be led to the Knowledge of this, by considering the foregoing Rubricks*  
of



## St. Matthias's Days

3

of the Old Common Prayer Book. King Edward's Books seem to have plac'd the Intercalary Day wrong, viz. between the 24th and 25th of February; thereby making Two 25th Days of that Month in Leap Year. The 25th of February, which in Leap-Years is counted for two Days, 1st and 2d. B. of Edw. VI. This seems to have been disallow'd of by the Compilers of Q. Elizabeth's Book, who order that when the Year leapeth, the Psalms and Lessons which serve for the 23d Day of Feb. shall be read again the Day following, O.C.P. So that by this Rule the Intercalary Day was to be, not as by K. Edward's Books, between the 24th and 25th, thereby making Two 25ths; but after the 23d, and before the 25th, making Two 24th Days, as the Old Romans us'd to do; and so again, this Rubrick gives us to understand which of these Two 24ths, St. Matthias's Day is to be observ'd upon: For if the Lessons of the 23d were to be read upon the first 24th Day in Leap Year, then that Day could not be St. Matthias's; For the first Lesson appointed for St. Matthias was Wisdom XIX; But the first Lesson, for the 23d of Feb. was Deut. II: Therefore 'tis plain, that according to the Old Common-Prayer-Book St. Matthias must not be celebrated upon the Intercalary Day, or the first 24th, but upon the Day after



*after the Intercalary, that is, the second 24th, or what we commonly call the 25th: Now since neither our present Calendar, or Rubricks, do declare which of the Two 24ths is St. Matthias, the Custom of the Church must determine the Point, which has order'd another Service upon that Day; and consequently that it must be kept on the Day following, viz. the 25th of February.*

*This is certain by the Rules and Practice of our own Church since the Reformation: But if we be govern'd by the Missale Romanum, the Matter is yet clearer and beyond all doubt. In Anno Bissextili Februarius est dierum 29 & Festum S. Matthiae celebratur 25 Feb. & bis dicitur Sexto Calendas, i. e. die 24 & die 25; & Litera Dominicalis, quæ assumpta fuit in Mense Januario, mutatur in Præcedentem. Ut si in Januario Litera Dominicalis fuit A mutatur in præcedentem quæ est G & Litera F bis servit 24, 25. Miss. Rom. in Rubr. ad Mens. Feb: Which Rule is in English this. In Leap Year February has 29 Days, and the Feast of St. Matthias is kept on the 25th of February, and the Sixth of the Calends is twice named, i. e. 24th and 25th Day: And the Dominical Letter, which serv'd for the Month of January, is chang'd into the foregoing one. So that if in January the Do-*  
mi-

minical Letter was A, it is chang'd into that which goes before it, viz. G, and the Letter F then serves for both the 24th and 25th of February. See the Roman Missal in the Rubrick, at the Bottom of the Month of February. *The same Rule is laid down in the Old Missals secundum Usum Sarum, which were us'd here in England before the Reformation: Si Bissextus fuerit, quarta Die a Cathedra S. Petri fiat Festum S. Matthiae, & F Litera bis numeretur; that is, if the Year be Bissextile, let St. Matthias's Day be kept on the fourth Day after the Chair of St. Peter, and let the Letter F be twice mentioned. Now the Cathedra S. Petri, the Chair of St. Peter, is always the 22d, the fourth Day after which is the 25th, to be St. Matthias's Day, which agrees with the Rule laid down in the Modern Missals.*

D. It is a notable Account upon my Word, and 'twere well if the Convocation now sitting, would propose it, or somewhat like it, to be put into the *Book of Common-Prayer*, amongst other *Amendments*, which I hear by the *Queen's Gracious Licence* they are empower'd to make.

C. I should be glad if they would too: But if they should not, Dr. *Nichols's Excellent Comment* is so likely to come into so many

many Hands, especially those of the *Clergy*, that I am confident, the Confusions You mention'd, are not like to happen again.

D. I must confess what You have read from *Dr. Alcock's* has entirely satisfied me as to this Point, but since You promis'd to read to me *Dr. Wallis's Letter to Bp. Fell*, I beg You wou'd let me hear it.

C. With all my Heart: But I must first beg Leave to read to You an Advertisement which the *Dr.* has put before it, concerning the Occasion of his Writing it.

D. Sir, You need make no Apology: Pray read it.

C. It is then in these Words. '*Dr. John Fell, & Dean of Christ-Church, and Bp. of Oxford,* did usually concern himself to have an Almanack, Yearly printed at the Theater Printing-House, in a large Sheet of Paper, adorn'd with elegant Sculptures.

'In that for the Year 1684, being *Leap-Year*, the Feast of *St. Matthias* should have been plac'd (as it had ever been in all *Leap-Years*) at *February 25th*, being the *Sixth Calends of March*, that is, the *Sixth Day backward* (inclusive) from *March 1st*, (or the *Calends of March*) but in other Years (which are not *Leap-Years*) on *February 24th*, which in those Years is 6 *Cal. Mart.*

'But

‘ But Dr. *Fell* (or those who were to  
 ‘ take care of that *Almanack*) not heeding  
 ‘ the Difference of *Leap-Years* from others,  
 ‘ had in that *Almanack* suffer’d St. *Matthias*  
 ‘ *Day* to be set at *Feb. 24th*, as in other  
 ‘ Years, not *designedly*, but by meer *Inad-*  
 ‘ *vertency*; nor was it so printed in any  
 ‘ other *Almanack* for that Year, or for any  
 ‘ other *Leap-Year* before that Time.

‘ But so it happen’d, that Dr. *William*  
 ‘ *Sancroft*, then Arch-Bp. of *Canterbury*, (I  
 ‘ know not upon what Suggestions) find-  
 ‘ ing in the Common-Prayer-Book St. *Mat-*  
 ‘ *thias* at *Feb. 24th*, 6 *Kl. Mart.* thought  
 ‘ it to be a *Mistake* of the *Almanack makers*;  
 ‘ and not well considering, that 6 *Kal. Mart.*  
 ‘ was (in the *Leap-Year*) on *Feb. 25th* (tho’  
 ‘ in other Years at *Feb. 24th*) did hastily  
 ‘ give out an *Order for Keeping that Festival*  
 ‘ (*that Year*) on *Febr. 24th*, which had  
 ‘ never been so before, either *before* or  
 ‘ *since* the Establishment of the present  
 ‘ *Book of Common-Prayer*.

‘ Bp. *Fell*, who had not *Designedly* done  
 ‘ it, but by *Inadvertency*, desir’d me to  
 ‘ draw up the following *Discourse*, (the  
 ‘ Substance of which I had Discours’d with  
 ‘ him) for the Satisfaction of the Arch-  
 ‘ Bp. which I did accordingly, but thought  
 ‘ it more decent to address it to the Bp. (as



‘ occasion’d by his *Almanack*) than to the  
 ‘ *Arch-Bp.* as occasion’d by his *Order*.

‘ The *Arch-Bp.* by this (and Discourse  
 ‘ with others to the same Purpose) seem’d  
 ‘ well satisfy’d that it was his *Mistake*, and  
 ‘ if he had continued *Arch-Bp.* till another  
 ‘ *Leap-Year*, and in good Circumstances, I  
 ‘ presume He would have revers’d his  
 ‘ former *Order*, and directed the *Almanacks*  
 ‘ to be printed as formerly.

‘ But it so happen’d, that before the  
 ‘ Year 1688, he was in Ill Circumstances  
 ‘ with K. *James II.* and that upon the *Re-*  
 ‘ *volution* of publick Affairs, before ano-  
 ‘ ther *Leap-Year* in 1692, *Arch-Bp. Sancroft*  
 ‘ was put out and *Arch-Bp. John Tillotson*  
 ‘ succeeded, who was aware of the *Mistake*,  
 ‘ but thought it more Civil to pass it over  
 ‘ in Silence, than seem to seek an Occasion  
 ‘ of thwarting his *Predecessor* yet living,  
 ‘ and so it pass’d *Sub Silentio*, expecting  
 ‘ there would soon after be a *Review* of the  
 ‘ *Common-Prayer-Book*, and then this, with  
 ‘ some other Things, would be rectified.

‘ When (upon the Death of Dr. *John*  
 ‘ *Tillotson*) Dr. *Thomas Tenison* succeeded as  
 ‘ *Arch Bp.* the Case was the same; He was  
 ‘ satisfied of the *Mistake*, and said if it  
 ‘ were now to do, He would not do it; but  
 ‘ it being so inconsiderable a matter on  
 ‘ what



‘what Day it be kept, He thought best (as  
‘his next *Predecessor* had done) to let it  
‘pass *Sub Silentio*, without giving any  
‘Order about it, and it hath so continued  
‘for the Years 1688, 1692, 1696, and 1700.

‘D. Sir, I thank You for this Favour: I  
‘would now beg You to let me hear the  
Letter.

‘C. It is as follows.

A Letter of Dr. *Wallis's* to  
Bishop *Fell*, concerning St.  
*Matthias Day*.

To the Right Reverend Father in God,  
John Fell, D.D. Lord Bishop of Oxford, 1684.

My LORD,

‘I N Obedience to your *Lordship's* Com-  
‘mand, I have put in Writing the Sum  
‘of that *Discourse* which lately pass'd  
‘with your *Lordship*, concerning the place-  
‘ing of St. *Matthias-Day*, at the 24<sup>th</sup> of  
‘*February* in the *Oxford Almanack*, Printed  
‘at the *Theater* for this present Year 1684,  
‘being *Bissextile*, or *Leap-Year*.

‘Where I must first premise, that all *Laws*  
 ‘are to be *Understood*, and *Expounded* ac-  
 ‘cording to the true *Intent* and *Meaning* of  
 ‘such *Laws*.

‘And consequently, If in the *Wording* or  
 ‘*Penning* of a *Law*, there happen to be any  
 ‘*Ambiguous* or *Doubtful Expression*, it is to  
 ‘be *Expounded*, according to what shall  
 ‘otherwise appear, to be the true *Intent* of  
 ‘the *Law*.

‘And moreover, If there chance to be  
 ‘any seeming (or real) *Antinomy*, or *Con-*  
 ‘*tradiction* of *Law*, to *Law*, or of *one part*  
 ‘of a *Law* to *another*; we are to *Interpret*,  
 ‘(if need be) to *Amend*, one by the other,  
 ‘according to the true *Intendment* of the  
 ‘*Law*.

‘As for Instance: In a late *Act* of *Parlia-*  
 ‘*ment* for raising of *Money*: not only in the  
 ‘*Printed Copies*, but in the *Original Record*,  
 ‘in appointing the *time* when the *Com-*  
 ‘*missioners* for that purpose were to meet,  
 ‘the *Year* of our *Lord* was *mis-written*. Yet  
 ‘the *Practice* was according to what *should*  
 ‘have been *written* (not according to what  
 ‘*was*) and it was justifiable according to the  
 ‘true *Intent* of the *Act* (which appeared  
 ‘from other *Parts* of it) tho’ *Contrary* to  
 ‘the *Words*; And it was (*ex post facto*)  
 ‘*Rectified* by a subsequent *Act*, made on  
 ‘*Pur-*

' Purpose, the next *Session of Parliament*.

' For indeed, it can hardly be avoided,  
' (unless by extraordinary Care) but that in  
' a Law of any considerable Length, there  
' may, ( by the Negligence of a Clerk, or  
' otherwise) some *Word*, or *Sentence* chance  
' to be *mis-written* or *mis-placed*.

' And as to the present Business concern-  
' ing the *Book of Common-Prayer*, and the  
' *Act* appointing it (whereof it self is a part)  
' there may be more need of such *equitable*  
' *Construction*, than perhaps your *Lordship*  
' is at first aware.

## II.

' I shall next premise, that it may be rea-  
' sonably presum'd to be the *Intendment* of  
' the present *Book of Common-Prayer*, (and  
' the Calendar thereof,) not to depart from  
' the ancient Practice of the Church (both  
' at home and abroad,) and the *Receiv'd*  
' *Rules of Ecclesiastical Computation*, ( for  
' many Hundred Years past) where there  
' is no Intimation of any Change intended:  
' Especially, where the Words stand as fair  
' for the wonted Practice as otherwise.

' Now the *standing Rule* of all the *Com-*  
' *putations*, for more than *Four Hundred*  
' *Years* past (none excepted) is this, or in  
' Words to this Purpose ;

*Bissex-*

*‘Bisextum Sextæ, Martis tenere Calendæ,  
 ‘Posteriore Die celebrantur Festa Mathiæ.*

‘and I think it is a part of the Canon Law.  
 ‘That is, it being a *Receiv’d Rule* in  
 ‘the *Roman Calendar*, that every *Fourth*  
 ‘Year is to have an *Intercalary*, or *Super-*  
 ‘*numerary Day*: and, this *Institution Day*  
 ‘to be between the *Sixth* and *Seventh Ca-*  
 ‘*lends of March*: This *Sixth Calends* is  
 ‘a second time repeated: (this *Institution*  
 ‘*Day* having also the Name of *Sexto Calen-*  
 ‘*das*,) which gives the Name of *Bisextile*,  
 ‘to what we call the *Leap-Year*.

‘And, for the same Reason (even in the  
 ‘*Theater Almanack*) the *Letter F* is doubled,  
 ‘in the *Column of Letters* for the *Day of*  
 ‘the *Week*, which causeth a Change of the  
 ‘*Dominical Letter* for the Remainder of  
 ‘the *Year*, which this *Year* is from thence-  
 ‘forth *E*, but was before *F*.

‘And, the *Ecclesiastical Computation*,  
 ‘(which follows the *Roman Calendar*) ha-  
 ‘ving affixed *St. Matthias Day* to the *Sixth*  
 ‘*Calends of March*, that is, to the *Sixth*  
 ‘*Day backwards, beginning with the First*  
 ‘*Day of March*, (or *Sexto die ante Calendas*  
 ‘*Martii inclusive Sumptas*,) this in the *Or-*  
 ‘*inary Year* falls on our *Twenty-fourth of*  
 ‘*February*; but in the *Leap-Year*, on the  
 ‘*Twenty-fifth*. ‘But,



‘But, because the *Insititious Day* (which  
‘in the *Bissextile* is our *Four and Twentieth*.)  
‘hath also the name of the *Sixth Calends*,  
‘and the Letter *F*; and some Doubt might  
‘thence arise; whether the *Natural* or  
‘*Preter-natural Sixth Calends* should be  
‘taken for St. *Matthias Day*, to put this  
‘past Dispute, the latter Verse is added,  
‘*Posteriore Die celebrantur Festa Mathia.*

‘declaring this to be understood of the  
‘*Natural Sixth Calends* (which comes every  
‘*Tear*.) not, of the *Insititious*, or *Preter-*  
‘*natural*; which comes but once in *Four*  
‘*Tears*, and would make this *Saint* but a  
‘*Quadriennial Saint*.

‘Now this having been the *Rule* for so  
‘many *Hundred Years*; and the *Practice*  
‘never varied, (either *before* or *since* the  
‘making of our present *Book of Common-*  
‘*Prayer*, nor any *Intimation* given, that it  
‘was intended we should depart from the  
‘wonted *Practice*: We may justly presume  
‘It was intended, that we should proceed  
‘as before.

III.

‘Your *Lordship* says, the *Rubrick* here is  
‘to us a *Law*, which fixeth it to the *Four*  
‘and *Twentieth Day of February*.

‘I answer: I find no such *Rubrick*, that  
‘saith

‘saith *St. Matthias Day*, is to be on the  
 ‘*Four and Twentieth Day of February*.

‘You’ll say, it stands in the *Common-Prayer-Book* against *that Day*; and is  
 ‘therefore on *that Day*, to be always kept,  
 ‘even in the *Leap-Year*, as an *Immoveable Feast*.

‘I answer: *First*, It doth indeed so stand,  
 ‘But so it did in the *Old Common-Prayer-Book* of *K. Charles I. K. James, Q. Elizabeth*, and *K. Edward VI.* ever since there  
 ‘was a *Common-Prayer-Book*. Yet was it  
 ‘never so kept in any *Leap-Year*: No, not  
 ‘in the *Years 1664, 1668, 1672, and 1680*  
 ‘since the making of what we now have.

‘*Secondly*, As it stands against *Feb. 24.*  
 ‘so, (which is here more to be heeded,) [it  
 ‘does] against *6 Cal. Mart.* And therefore  
 ‘at *Feb. 24.* because *6 Kl.* stands there, to  
 ‘which this *Feast* is affixed, and when *6 Kl.*  
 ‘removes, this is to be remov’d with it.

‘*Thirdly*, As *6 Kl.* stands at *Feb. 24.* so  
 ‘in our *Common-Prayer-Book*, *Prid. Kl.*  
 ‘stands at *Feb. 28.* and *3 Kl.* at *Feb. 27.* and  
 ‘*4 Kl.* at *Feb. 26.* and *5 Kl.* at *Feb. 25.* as  
 ‘well as *6 Kl.* at *Feb. 24.* Yet your *Lord-ship*  
 ‘will not think, that we are thus to  
 ‘compute in the *Leap-Year*: But all these  
 ‘in the *Leap-Year*, are to be thrust down (as  
 ‘to our *Civil Computation*) one Day lower;  
 ‘(that

81  
17  
St. Matthias's Day.

(that is, one Day farther from the First of February) and St. Matthias Day with them: 'Tis true, there is in the Leap-Year another 6 Kl. at Feb. 24. But this is *Artificial*, not the *Natural*.

*Fourthly*, If You say, this doth not concern us, because in this *Oxford Almanack*, there is no Notice taken of the *Kalends*, &c. and therefore You are not concern'd where to place *Prid. Kl.* &c.

[I answer]. This is very True: They are not there placed: But even in this *Almanack* we have the *Column of Letters for the Week Day*: And therein, the Letter *C*, at Feb. 29. (not at Feb. 28) as in the *Common-Prayer-Book*: And *B* (not *C*) at Feb. 28: And *A* (not *B*) at Feb. 27: And *G* (not *A*) at Feb. 26: And *F* (not *G*) at Feb. 25, (as well as at Feb. 24, contrary to what is in the *Common-Prayer-Book*, which intended no more than to shew how all these stand (and St. Matthias Day with them) in the *Common-Year*, not in the *Leap-Year*. Otherwise, You must in the *Leap-Year* change the *Dominical Letter*, not at 6. Kl. (or Feb. 25.) but at *Prid. Kl.* or Feb. 29. which in our *Civil Account* is the *Intercalary Day*: But in the *Ecclesiastical Account* (which we are here to regard) Feb. 24.

C

*Fifthly*,

‘*Fiftly*, We are told in the *Common-Prayer Book* (at the Top of the Page,) that *February hath 28 Days*: Well, but is this the Number always? If so, what means the Number 29 in the *second Column*? You’ll say *no*, not always, but for the most part 28 is the Number of Days in February: Namely, in the *Common-Year*: but in the *Leap-Year* the Number of Days in February is 29. Which we are to understand from the commonly *Receiv’d Rules of Computation*, tho’ there be no *Rubrick* (as being thought needless) to tell us thus much; And when it so happens, the Number 29, serves to direct what *Lessons* are to be read on such 29th Day, which I think is the only Reason why that Number standeth there. (And if that whole Column of 1, 2, 3, &c. had stood next before that of *Lessons* to which it refers, it would have been less subject to Mistake.)

‘In like manner *St. Matthias Day* stands at 24 Feb. VI. Kl. Mart. And is therefore kept on Feb. 24; Not always, but for the most part; Namely, in the *Common-Year*, (when *February hath 28 Days*.) But in the *Leap-Year* (when *February hath 29 Days*) it is to be kept on Feb. 25. (tho. no *Rubrick* does expressly say it) as being thought needless; the *Common Practice* be-



## St. Matthias's Day.

19

'being thought a sufficient Direction: But  
'always on the *Sixth Calends of March*:  
'And therefore changeth its Seat as that  
'doth, from *Feb. 24*, to *Feb. 25*.

'*Sixthly*, But further; Where we are  
'told that *February hath 28 Days*, it fol-  
'lows also, *the Moon hath 30 Days*. But  
'hath the *Moon (of February) 30 Days al-*  
'ways? No; not *always*. Or, is it then  
'only when *February hath 28 Days*? No;  
'not then *only*; nor even then *at all*. But  
'when then? It is (if at all) in the *Leap-*  
'*Year* only, when *February hath 29 Days*:  
'But how shall we know this? Not from  
'any *Rubrick* in the *Book of Common-Pray-*  
'*er*: But from (what is there suppos'd) the  
'*Receiv'd Rule of Ecclesiastick Computation*,  
'which (if exprest in Words at length)  
'are to this Purpose: "*February in the*  
"*Common-Year hath 28 Days; but in every*  
"*Fourth Year, which is Bissextile or Leap-*  
"*Year, it hath 29 Days*. And the Moon  
"*of February in the Common-Year, (when*  
"*February hath 28 Days) hath 28 Days*:  
"*But in the Leap-Year (when February*  
"*hath 29 Days) the Moon of February*  
"*hath 30 Days*.

'And, for that Reason, the *Golden Num-*  
'bers in the *First Column* for *February*, are  
'in the *Leap-Year* to stand, (or be suppos'd

to stand) one Day lower than in the Common-Year: Which in Ancient Books of Computation, was wont to be said, in the Rules, in Words express: And in the Calendar was wont to be insinuated by a Descending Stroke from the Place, where the Golden Number stands to the Day next below it (in the Column of Calends, Nones and Ides) in this Manner:

11	KL	IV. Non.
15	III.	
8	Prtd.	
	Non.	
16	VIII.	
	VII.	

And so every where till we be past the Day of Intercalation: And, if they had reckon'd according to our Civil Computation in the Column, 1, 2, 3, &c. it must so have been to the End of the Month.

But, if we do not suppose such a Removal of the Golden Number One Day lower than in the Leap-Year, the Moon of January will have (as always) 30 Days: That of February (as in other Years) 29 days, (never 30 days) and that of March (which in all other Years hath 30 days) will have in the Leap-Year 31 days.

But there is nothing of all this in any Rubrick of our Common-Prayer-Book (which was never intended to depend on all these Punctilio's: So that the whole of what concerns February in the Leap-Year is to be sought elsewhere; not in the Rubrick of our Book of Common-Prayer.

And

' And (to speak as the Truth is) I suspect  
 ' as to the Number of the *Month* in *February*,  
 ' 30 is *Mis-written* for 29: And that a like  
 ' *Mistake* is in the Five last Months (*August*,  
 ' *September*, *October*, *November*, *December*)  
 ' putting 30 for 29, and 29 for 30, all along.  
 ' For as the *Numbers* now stand, they agree  
 ' not with their *Respective Months*; and  
 ' (which is worse) the *Lunar Year* is made  
 ' longer by *Two Days* than it should be.  
 ' That is, (by this *Computation*) the *Com-*  
 ' *mon Lunar Year* is to have 356 Days; to  
 ' which all *Computists* allow but 354 Days;  
 ' as making it shorter, by 11 Days, than  
 ' the *Common Solar Year* of 365 Days.  
 ' *Seventhly*, 'Tis to be observed, that in  
 ' the *Common-Prayer-Book*, after the *Co-*  
 ' *lumn* of the *Civil Computation* of Days  
 ' (by *first*, *second*, *third Day* of the *Month*,  
 ' &c. We have *Two other Columns* inter-  
 ' pos'd (before that of the *Feasts*) namely,  
 ' that of the *Week-Day Letters* A, B, C, &c.  
 ' and that of the *Calends*, *Nones* and *Ides*;  
 ' and by these (as nearer to it) We are  
 ' rather to be guided in seeking the *Feast-*  
 ' *Days*, (than *Leaping* over both these) by  
 ' that which is more remote.

' *Eighthly*, This *Column* of Days, by 1,  
 ' 2, 3, &c. came not at all into the *Church*  
 ' *Calendar*, till of late, for in the old Books

(*de Computo*;) it is not all. And, when it first came in, it was wont to be the last *Column* in the page, (not one of the first, as now, for the most part, it is;) to prevent all mistakes in confounding the *Civil* and the *Ecclesiastick Account*. And it had been as well, if it had (for the same reason) been so plac'd still, or at least, next before the *Lessons*; which, I think, in this *Book of Common-Prayer* (but not in the former) are to be guided by it.

In the Three Manuscript *Calendars*, to the Old *Statute Books* of the *University* of *Oxford* (written about the Time of *K. Henry IV.* or sooner,) it is not at all. Nor in Two or Three other *Manuscripts* in my Custody: (whereof I take one to be that of *Grotest*, Bishop of *Lincoln*: Another of *Johannes de Sacro Bosco*, written about the Time of *K. Henry III.* or *K. John*: another about the Time of *K. Edward II.*) Nor in one shew'd me lately by *Dr. Gale*, (writ about *K. Edward the Third's* Time) But in one shew'd me by *Dr. Crowther* (which I think belongs to the *Church* of *St. Paul*, and was written about *K. Henry the Sixth's* Time) I find it written but in the last *Column* of all, and so it is in *Clavius's Calendarium Romanum*, Cap. 9.

Ninthly, This, If I mistake not, is the only



'only Reason why in the *Church Calendar*,  
 'we retain the *Column of Calends, Nones*,  
 'and *Ides*, because the *Ecclesiastical Com-*  
 'putation was wont to be reckon'd by them:  
 'Not by the *Days of the Month*, number'd  
 'from the Beginning of it, as we now  
 'reckon in the *Civil Computation* here in  
 'England, (and 'tis ill done, that in our  
 'smaller *Books of Common-Prayer*, this *Co-*  
 'lumn is left out) Nor is there any other  
 'Reason (that I know) than this, why the  
 'Church has ever thought fit to retain it in  
 'the *Church Calendar*, for if without this,  
 'the *Feasts* (and other *Remarkables*) were  
 'confin'd to the *Days of the Month*, (num-  
 'ber'd from the Beginning,) as we have  
 'reckon'd: there were no need of inserting  
 'the *Calends, Nones, and Ides* at all.

'Lastly, This *Computation* being admitted  
 '(as it needs must) the keeping of *St. Mat-*  
 '*thias Day* sometimes on the 24<sup>th</sup>, some-  
 'times on the 25<sup>th</sup> of *February*, (which is  
 'but accidental) doth not make it a *Move-*  
 '*able Feast*, because always fix'd to the *Sixth*  
 '*Calends of March*, which ever was the  
 '*Rule for St. Matthias Day*, and for the  
 '*Seat* of it we are not to enquire how many  
 '*Days forward from the first of February*,  
 'but how many *Days backward from the*  
 '*Calends of March*, in like manner as if it  
 had

had been ~~fix'd~~ to the *Last of February*,  
 which yet would happen to be sometimes  
 the 28th, sometimes the 29th Day.

Bredium, dnm III. 2

This being well consider'd, the only  
 Scruple that can now remain is but this;  
 There being in the *Leap-Year*, 6 *Kl.* twice  
 and twice the *Letter F*, one at *Feb. 24th*,  
 the other at *Feb. 25th*. How shall we  
 know which of these is to be taken? Whe-  
 ther that at *Feb. 24th*, or that at *Feb. 25th*?  
 And if the *Latter*, there wants a *Rubrick*  
 to tell us so.

Answer: That if *Feb. 24th*, or *25th*,  
 is wholly *extraneous* to this Point, as not at  
 all appertaining to the *Ecclesiastical Com-*  
*putation* (but to the *Civil only*) and was  
 not in the *Old Church Calendars* at all, (as  
 was said before) and when it first crept in,  
 it stood in the *last Column* (and so gave no  
 Occasion to mistake) and tho' now it be  
 gotten into a more forward Place, yet it  
 is not the *Rule of Ecclesiastical Compu-*  
*tation*, but the *Civil only*; and stands here  
 but to shew how, in the *Ordinary Year*,  
 the *Civil Computation* answers to the *Eccle-*  
*siastical*, nor doth it stand in the next before  
 that of ~~the~~ the *Feasts*, but two *Columns*  
 come between which are not guided by it.

And

‘And as to 6 *Kl.* which twice occurs, it is in Reason (if nothing else appear to the contrary) to be rather understood of that which is *naturally*, and indeed so (that is, the *Sixth Day* (reckoning backwards from the first of *March* inclusively,) than that which is *Insititious* and *Supposititious* and which here passeth to no Account, but is to be reputed as if it were not here at all: and which (such as it is) comes but once in *four Years*, and *St. Matthias Day* if fix'd to this, must come no oftner.

## IV.

‘And as to what is said of a *Rubrick* wanting: I say, It is no more wanting here than in former *Books of Common Prayer*, and other like *Calendars*: Notwithstanding which, the constant Practice hath always carried it for the true 6 *Kl.* not the *Supposititious* and *Insititious*.

‘And such *Rubrick*, tho’ not express’d, is suppos’d to be understood (as many others are) from the *Equity of the Thing*, and from the *Common Practice of the Church*; and from the *Receiv’d Ancient Rules of Computation*; and (in particular) from that of *Posteriore Die*, &c.

‘If it be still insisted on, that such *Rubrick* is then wanting in our present *Book*.

‘ I answer : ( ‘Tis thus far ) true, that such  
 ‘ *Rubrick* ( if there ) might have been of Use  
 ‘ for *Direction*. And it had been *Necessary*  
 ‘ ( at least very *Convenient* ) if it had been  
 ‘ the *Intent* of that *Book* to descend to all  
 ‘ the *Punctilio*’s of *Ecclesiastical Computa-*  
 ‘ *tion*.

‘ But we have no Reason to Judge, that  
 ‘ to be the *Design* of This *Book* ; nor so to  
 ‘ *Expound* it, as if it were. For, if so,  
 ‘ there will be found a great many more to  
 ‘ be wanting ; and that in all Matters of  
 ‘ Greater Consequence than this is.

‘ As, for Instance, There is here no *Ru-*  
 ‘ *brick* to tell us, that once in Four Years,  
 ‘ a *Supernumerary day* is to be some where  
 ‘ inserted : nor, which *Year* of the Four  
 ‘ that is : Nor, that this *Day* is to be in-  
 ‘ serted in *February*, which is therefore, in  
 ‘ such *Year* to have 29-Days : Nor, which  
 ‘ of those 29, is the *Insertitious Day* ; whe-  
 ‘ ther the last ( which in the *Civil Compu-*  
 ‘ *tation* seems to be it ) or rather ( in the  
 ‘ *Ecclesiastical Computation* ) that which  
 ‘ comes between 6 *Kl.* and 7 *Kl. Martii* ;  
 ‘ which in the *Leap-Year*, is that which,  
 ‘ in the *Civil Account*, is called *Feb. 24.* but,  
 ‘ in the *Ecclesiastical Account*, passeth for  
 ‘ no *Day* at all. Yet all this must be under-  
 ‘ stood, or else our *Ecclesiastical Account*  
 ‘ will be very Lame. ‘ If



'If it be said, that all this is to be understood from the *Common Practice*, and from the *Received Rules* for the *Comparing the Year*: And therefore the *Common-Prayer-Book* need not to be cumber'd with it.

'I say; 'tis true: All this (and a great deal more) is, from hence, to be understood. But, if all that; why not this also of *Posteriore Die*, &c.?

'If it be said; This is intimated by the *Number 29 in February*, in the *Column for the day of the Month*, with a *Blank* under *C*, in that for the *Days of the Week*, and under *Prid. Kl.* in the next *Column*, and in that for *Feasts*.

'I say, 'Tis true, we have 29 in the *present Book*; (but in the *former*, we had not so much; yet, that which but now we mentioned, was to be there understood also.) And this, I say may seem (very darkly) to intimate (and but to intimate) *Something*. But, what that *Something* is, (if we had no other *Light* to help us,) would be hard to say.

'For this (at the rate it is now argued,) would as much prove, that *February* hath *always*, (not in the *Leap-Year* only,) 29 *Days*; as, That *always* (not only in the *Common-Year*) *St. Matthias Day* is to be kept on *Feb. 24.* And that *always*, *Prid.*

' *Kl.* is *Feb.* 28. And, that the *Letter C*, is  
 ' always to stand at *Feb.* 28. And, at *Feb.*  
 ' 29. no *Letter* at all. And (supposing that,  
 ' in some *Year* or other there is to be an *In-*  
 ' *tercalation*) the *Intercalation* is to be *Feb.*  
 ' 29. between *Kl. Mart.* and *Prid. Kl.* (not at  
 ' *Feb.* 24. of which there is not the least *In-*  
 ' *timation*;) And that the *Dominical Letter* is  
 ' (if at all) to change at the *first* of *March*,  
 ' (not at *Feb.* 25.) And the *Letter* to be  
 ' *doubled* (if any) not to be *F* (at *Feb.* 24,  
 ' and 25.) but some other (and most probably,  
 ' *C* or *D*) at *Feb.* 29. (For all the other *Days*  
 ' have their *Letters fixed*, and this only a  
 ' *Blank* between *C* and *D*: And I know not  
 ' how (without further *Light*) to make a  
 ' more likely *Conjecture*.

' 'Tis true, that in the *Table of Moveable*  
 ' *Feasts* we have, at the *Years* 1664, 1668,  
 ' 1672, 1676, 1680, 1684, 1688, 1692,  
 ' 1696, 1700, *Two Dominical Letters*: And  
 ' we may thence guess (but are not told)  
 ' that it is likely so to fall out thenceforth  
 ' every *Fourth Year*, and consequently that  
 ' in each of those *Years* there is some time  
 ' or other a *Change* of the *Dominical Letter*.  
 ' But it tells us not at what *Time* of the  
 ' *Year*, that *Change* is: Nor is, indeed, the  
 ' *Change* in those *Years*, But in the *Years*  
 ' *next before them*: For that very *Table* tells

' us,

us, *The Supputation of the Year of our Lord*  
*in the Church of England, beginneth the five*  
*and twentieth Day of March; whereas*  
*the Change of the Dominical Letter is at*  
*Feb. 25th, next before such 25th of March,*  
*and therefore in the Precedent Year ac-*  
*cording to our Computation, and therefore*  
*not those Years but the next Precedent have*  
*Two (or rather Three) Dominical Letters.*

All which is not said to cast any *Asper-*  
*sion* on the *Calendar* rightly *Understood,*  
 but to shew, that it was not the *Intent* of  
 the *Common-Prayer-Book* to Descend to  
 such *Punctilio's*, but to presume them as  
 otherwise known from the *Common Practice*  
 and the *Receiv'd Rules* of *Computation,*  
 and that we do Injury to that, to Confine  
 it so narrowly to its own *Words*, without  
 admitting what is otherwise known, and  
 here presum'd, for giving the true sense  
 of it.

## V.

I say therefore, for the Understanding  
 of this, as well as of other *Laws: First,*  
 That some Things are to be presum'd for  
*Common Prudence and Direction* as so ob-  
 vious, and easy to be understood, as that it  
 were *Pedantick and Ridiculous*, to think it  
 Necessary to give a *Rubrick* for *Direction.*

Thus

' Thus in the *Office for Baptism*, the Words  
 ' *He, She, They*, and divers others of like  
 ' import, are to be frequently *varied*, ac-  
 ' cording as a *Male* or a *Female*, and *one* or  
 ' *more* are to be *Baptized*: Yet no Man  
 ' thinks it necessary to add a *Rubrick* to di-  
 ' rect *How* and in *what Cases* such *Change* is  
 ' to be made: Because every Man of com-  
 ' mon Prudence can from his own *Discre-*  
 ' *tion* know (without *Direction*) that; and  
 ' how such *Change* should be made: And  
 ' may presume, that it was not the *Intend-*  
 ' *ment* of the *Law*, that in such Cases, a Man  
 ' should speak *Nonsense*, or *False Grammar*.

' So in the *Office for Burial*: The Words,  
 ' *This our Brother* are to be *varied*, as Oc-  
 ' casion shall require, for *This our Sister*, or  
 ' perhaps *These Our Brethren* or *Sisters*:  
 ' Yet no Man can think an *Express Rubrick*  
 ' here *Necessary*, because *Common Discretion*  
 ' will serve: And the like in many other  
 ' Places.

' And it was thought *Ridiculous* (which I  
 ' have known at least once to happen) when  
 ' a *Gentlewoman* reading to other *Gentle-*  
 ' *women* the *Prayers of the Church*, began  
 ' with *Dearly beloved Brethren*: Whereas  
 ' *Common Prudence* might have taught Her,  
 ' either to leave out the Word *Brethren*, or  
 ' to have *Chang'd* it for *Sisters*.

' So



'So in the Office for Marriage: *I N. take Thee N: No Man doubts, without a Rubrick, but that for N and N, are to be put the Respective Names of the Persons concerned, and the like in other Places.*

'And so in the Answer to the First Question in the Catechism, *What is your Name?* It is not Intended that the Child, or other Person Catechized, should say *N* or *M*, but should tell *His* or *Her* Proper Name: And to the Second Question, *Who gave you that Name?* The Common Answer is, *My Godfathers and my Godmothers in my Baptism, &c.* But in Case the Person had no Godfathers or Godmothers, which often happens, especially in Private Baptism, where it is not required till after Baptism, when They are to be Presented to the Publick Congregation: or not Two of each (it being not required that a Boy should have Two Godmothers, nor a Girl Two Godfathers;) or not They, but the Father (as it often happens) gives the Name: the Person in such Cases is either to answer according to Truth; or if such Form of Words be used, they are so to be Understood, as Intimating the more usual Practice of the Church, (not that of the Particular Person.) For it cannot be presumed to be the Intent of the Law, that a Person should tell a Lye.

'So

‘So when in the Office for Marriage, it  
 ‘is said, *The Man with his Right-Hand,*  
 ‘*shall take the Woman by her Right-Hand,*  
 ‘and say. The Words cannot in Reason be  
 ‘thought to be so strictly taken, as that a  
 ‘Person Dumb, or which wants a Right-  
 ‘Hand, might not be Married: But rather,  
 ‘that in such Cases, Signs may serve for  
 ‘Words; and a Left-Hand, for a Right-  
 ‘Hand. And so in Case a Woman have  
 ‘not a Fourth-Finger, on which to put the  
 ‘Ring.

‘And therefore it was looked upon as a  
 ‘Ridiculous Proviso, (in one of Oliver’s Acts  
 ‘for Marriage,) to this purpose; *Provided al-*  
 ‘ways, that, if the Person have not a Right-  
 ‘Hand, it is not necessary to take by the  
 ‘Right-hand; nor, to say such Words, in  
 ‘case the Person be Dumb. For all such  
 ‘like Proviso’s, are, by Common Intendment,  
 ‘presumed to be Understood; And he was  
 ‘Over Officious, who presented a Cripple  
 ‘(who had never a Knee) for not Kneeling  
 ‘at the Sacrament.

## VI.

‘Secondly, Beside such equitable Inter-  
 ‘pretations (from Principles of Common Pru-  
 ‘dence and Discretion,) which ought, I  
 ‘think, to be admitted in all Laws: We  
 ‘are, in the present Case, to presume (as  
 ‘other-

otherwise known) the Received Rules of Ecclesiastick Computation, and the Constant Practice, consonant to such Rules; which are to be admitted, as needful for shewing the true Intent of the present Law; and to supply the place of a Rubrick (where it may seem wanting) for the Right Understanding of our Church Calendar: Presuming, that it was not Intended to depart from thence, where there is no mention of such Intent.

As, for Instance: Among the Rules for Moveable Feasts, we have this for one, **EASTER-DAY** is always the first Sunday after the first Full Moon, which happens next after the one and twentieth day of March. Now it so happen'd for this present Year (to look no farther) that (as our Almanack tells us, printed at the Theater for this Year, and others agree with it) it is Full-Moon on Friday, March 21st, about Two a Clock in the Morning, I ask therefore, whether we are to take this Full-Moon (which happens on, not after, March 21st, For the Paschal Full-Moon: If not, we must wait another Full-Moon, which will not be 'till Saturday Apr. 19.) And then, either Sunday Apr. 20, or Apr. 27. (the Sunday following) must be Easter-Day. But if that on March 21st, be the

‘*Paschal Full-Moon*; then should *Sunday*,  
 ‘*March 23<sup>d</sup>*, (as being the *next Sunday*)  
 ‘be *Easter-Day*. But, the same *Almanack*  
 ‘tells us, that *Easter-Day* is *March 30*,  
 ‘with which the *Tables in the Common-*  
 ‘*Prayer-Book* agree.

‘And I have no way to solve this *Di-*  
 ‘*lemma*, but by saying, The *Full-Moon* here  
 ‘*Intended*, is not the *True Full-Moon in*  
 ‘*the Heavens* (which the *Word* would seem  
 ‘to import) which happeneth (as was said)  
 ‘on *March 21*: But the *Supposed Full-Moon*;  
 ‘which, according to the *Received Paschal*  
 ‘*Tables*, the *Church Reputeth* to be the *Full-*  
 ‘*Moon*, though indeed it be not: For tho’  
 ‘at the Time when these *Tables* were made,  
 ‘the *Reputed Full-Moon*, was either the  
 ‘same, or very near the same, with the  
 ‘*True Full-Moon*: Yet, in Process of Time,  
 ‘as the *Equinox*, which then happened at  
 ‘*March 21*, (and in *Ecclesiastical Compu-*  
 ‘*tation* is still *Reputed* so to do) is indeed  
 ‘come Ten or Eleven Days backward, to  
 ‘*March 11<sup>th</sup>*, or (sometimes) *March 10<sup>th</sup>*:  
 ‘so the *Full-Moons* (which are now *Re-*  
 ‘*puted* to fall as then they did) are indeed  
 ‘come backward four or five Days. And,  
 ‘particularly, that in the present Case,  
 ‘which happens on *Friday March 21<sup>st</sup>*, is  
 ‘*Reputed* to be on *Tuesday, March 25<sup>th</sup>*, and  
 ‘there-



' therefore *March 30th* (being the next  
' *Sunday after* ) is *Easter-Day* : And the  
' like happens very often.

' But we have no *Rubrick*, in the *Church*  
' *Calendar*, which teacheth us to distinguish  
' between the *True*, and the *Putative Full-*  
' *Moon* on which *Easter* depends. But we  
' are therein left to the *Receiv'd Rules* of  
' *Ecclesiastick Computation* for our Direction,  
' which are here presumed; which are to  
' this purpose.

' In the first *Column* of our *Church Calen-*  
' *dar*, we are to seek the *Golden Number* for  
' the *present Year*, (so called because it was  
' wont to be written in such *Calendars*, in  
' *Red Letters*, or perhaps *Letters of Gold*  
' sometimes;) called also the *Prime* (as de-  
' noting, on what *Day* of each *Month*, the  
' *New Moon*, or *Luna Prima*, is *Reputed*  
' to happen;) and thence reckoning for-  
' ward till we come to the *Luna Decima*  
' *Quinta*, or the *Fifteenth day* of such *Lunar*  
' *Month*, this is the *Putative Full-Moon*.

' Thus, in the present Case, the *Golden*  
' *Number* for the *Year 1684*, is 13, which  
' we find at *March 11th*, which is there-  
' fore the *Putative New-Moon*, whose *Full-*  
' *Moon*, or *Fifteenth day*, is *March 25th*,  
' And this being the first *Full Moon* after  
' *March 21st*, (the *Putative Equinox*) is the

'Paschal Full-Moon; and the Sunday next  
'following, at March 30th, is Easter-day.

'But even these Golden Numbers are not  
'always so carefully written, but that we  
'have need to recur to the Rules de Com-  
'puta, to rectify what Mistake may happen.

'As for Instance, at Jan. 1st we have  
'(for the Golden Number) 2: As intimating  
'that, in such Year whose Golden Number  
'is 2, the New-Moon is reputed to happen  
'at Jan. 1st. but we have the same also at  
'Jan. 12th, as if then also it were New-  
'Moon the same Year. Yet we cannot  
'think, that our Church Intended to make  
'a Month of Eleven days; and therefore  
'may presume that One of these Numbers  
'is miswritten.

'And the like happens at Jan. 3, and Jan.  
'14: at both which Places, we have 10 for  
'the Golden Number. As if, when the  
'Golden Number is 10, it were New-Moon  
'at both those Days; and therefore we may  
presume that One of them is miswritten.

'And if we have recourse to the ancient  
'Rules for placing the Golden Number, we  
'shall find, that, at Jan. 1st, and Jan. 30th  
'stead of 2 and 10, should have been writ-  
ten 3 and 11.

'In

'In like Manner we shall find, that 13  
'is *Mis-written* for 14, at Jan 30, and 2  
'for 11, at May 1.

'And all these happening in the *First*  
'*Edition* (and all or most of them continued  
'ever since) makes me think it is so in the  
'*Original Record*. And in *Later Editions* I  
'find many others, which I take to be but  
'the *Printer's Mistakes*: Beside many other  
'mistakes in mis-placing (as there are in  
'mis-writing) the *Golden Numbers*.

VIII. *And I have*  
'But when we *Assent and Consent* to all and  
'every Thing therein contained, the Words I  
'presume are not so strictly to be understood,  
'as if we *Consented* to these *Mis-writings*:  
'We *Assent to the Whole of the Book*, and  
'according to the true *Intent and Meaning*  
'thereof; that is, according to what should  
'have been, and was *Intended to be written*;  
'not to the *Clerk's mis-writings*.

'I forbear to instance in divers others,  
'which stand in need of the same *Salvo*, and  
'which made me premise that *Caution*, of  
'*Understanding the Law according to the True*  
'*Intendment of it*: Notwithstanding a  
'*Mistake in Writing*, which tho' perhaps  
'we may not take upon us the Boldness to  
'*Amend*, yet is so to be *Understood*, as if it  
'were so *Amended*, as was indeed *Intended*.

'As

‘As particularly, The Table of Moveable  
 ‘Feasts, doth expressly order the First Day  
 ‘of Lent, meaning thereby *Asb-Wednesday*,  
 ‘for the Year 1688, to be kept on Thursday  
 ‘March 1st, (instead of *Wednesday*, Feb. 29.)  
 ‘Yet Your Lordship will not think it reason-  
 ‘able that *Asb-Wednesday* be kept on a Thurs-  
 ‘day, but rather (as was Intended, and  
 ‘should have been written) on *Wednesday*  
 ‘Feb. 29th.

## IX.

C. Sir, I have abus’d Your Patience, I  
 fear, by reading so much of this long Letter  
 to You; especially, since it does not  
 throughout *Directly* and *Immediately* con-  
 cern the Point we are upon, and therefore  
 I will lay it by, since what is unread re-  
 lates chiefly to the *Rule for finding Easter*,  
 which You are pleas’d to tell me, I have  
 satisfy’d You in.

D. No, Pray Sir, read it out.

C. The Doctor then goes on thus: ‘But  
 ‘I return to the *Rule for Easter*, where,  
 ‘to what was before cited, we have this  
 ‘added, *And if the Full-Moon happens upon a*  
 ‘*Sunday*, *Easter-Day is the Sunday after*,  
 ‘which fixeth the Word *After*, in the for-  
 ‘mer Clause, to its Proper Sense, so as  
 ‘not to be Understood barely for *on*, or  
 ‘*after*.

‘Now



' Now put we the Case, that the *Putative*  
' *Paschal Full-Moon*, fall as soon as possibly  
' it may, This cannot be sooner than *March*  
' *22d* (for it must be after *March 21st*)  
' The *Sunday* after this *Full-Moon* can't be  
' sooner than *March 23d*, and therefore  
' sooner than it *Easter* (by this *Rule*)  
' cannot happen: For if such *Full-Moon*  
' on *March the 22d* happen to be *Sunday*,  
' *Easter-Day* is not to be *that Sunday*, but  
' the *Sunday following*.

' Yet, the *Table of Moveable Feasts* tells  
' us, that for the Year 1668, *Easter-Day* is  
' on *March 22d*, (And Your *Lordship* may  
' remember, that it was so *Kept*,) and the  
' *Table to find Easter for ever* tells us, that  
' it must *always be so Kept*, when the *Golden*  
' *Number* is 16, and the *Dominical Letter*  
' *D*; in all which Cases the *Tables* place  
' *Easter* on *March 22d*, but the *Rule* on  
' *March 29th*.

' And the like happens in many other  
' Cases, where the *Rule* assigns *one Day*,  
' and the *Table another*: Yet are we not to  
' think, that the *Church Intends*, that in  
' such Cases we should keep *Two Easters*.

' This *Antinomy* cannot be reconciled,  
' without Admitting a *Mistake*, either in  
' the *Rule*, or in the *Tables*; we must there-  
' fore enquire from other *Circumstances*,  
' whe-

‘whether of the *Two* the *Law* doth Principally *Intend*, (that of the *Rule*, or that of the *Tables*) and as to the *meaning* (tho’ we may not alter the *Words*) *Amend* (or at least *Explain*) the One by the Other.

‘Now sure it is, that the *Tables* are the same as in former Ages, and as the *Church* hath always practic’d at *Home* and *Abroad*, ever since the *fixing* of the *Paschal Tables* by *Dionysius Exiguus*, save the *Roman Church*, which herein we do not follow [which] hath, about a *Hundred Years* since, introduced the *Gregorian Account*: But the *Rule* is new, and contrary to the *Churches Practice*; nor is there any Intimation, that they did wittingly *Intend* to Change the *Ancient Practice*: For if so, They would not have continued the *Wonted Tables*, which *Contradict* the *Rule*; but did rather *Intend*, (tho’ therein there happen’d to be a *mistake*) to explain the *Tables* by these *Rules*.

‘And therefore, upon the *Whole*, I rather think it to be the *Intent* of our *Church*, that the *Tables* should be followed, and not the *Rule*; and the *Rule* to be *Understood*, as if it had been thus Penned; *But if the Full-Moon happen on a Sunday, Easter-Day is that Sunday, not the Sunday After*. And then, both the *Rule*, and *Tables*

'Tables do agree with the Churches Constant Practice.

## X.

'The like Practice of the Church must help us also in another Case; where we are told, that

Rogation-Sunday	} is {	Five Weeks	} after	
Ascension-Day		Fourty Days		Easter:
Whit-Sunday		Seven Weeks		
Trinity-Sunday		Eight Weeks		

'Where After Easter, which is Indifferently Applied at once, to all of them; must, as to Rogation-Sunday, Whit-Sunday, and Trinity Sunday, needs be Understood as Exclusive of Easter-Day; and if we had no Light from elsewhere, should reasonably be therefore understood of Ascension-Day: But, because the Church hath always kept this Feast on Thursday, not on Friday, and we have no sufficient Intimation, that they did now Intend to Alter the Wonted Practice; We must say, that After Easter, as to Ascension-Day, is to be Understood as Inclusive, but as to the Rest, as Exclusive of Easter-Day: And therefore we continue to keep Ascension-Thursday, not Ascension Friday.

'The like We are to say as to the Fourty Days of Lent, of which we are told, that

*Ash-Wednesday* is the *First*: But we are not told which is the *Last*: which, reckoning forward from *Ash-Wednesday*, would fall upon *Palm-Sunday*, (the *Sunday* before *Easter*.) But the constant *Practice* of the *Church* directs us to continue it till *Easter-Eve*: And (for preserving the *Number* of *Fourty*) to abate out of that *Number*. So much Reason there is to make use of the *Churches* constant *Practice* for *Expounding*, what, in the *Words* of the *Law*, may seem obscure in *Matters* of greater *Consequence*, than that of *St. Matthias Day*.

And at the Bottom of the *Table* of *Moveable Feasts*, we have this *Remark* included within the *Lines* of that *Table*, as a Part thereof, and a *Direction* how that *Table* is to be *Understood*, viz. *Note, That the Supputation of the Year of our Lord in the Church of England beginneth the Five and Twentieth Day of March*: But if we were to follow this *Direction*, without further *Light* from *Practice*, it would produce a *Strange Confusion*: For then *Easter-Day*, for the Year 1668, (on *March 22d*) must have been kept the *Year* following that which is *Intended*: And on a *Monday* (not a *Sunday*) *twenty Days* before the *Easter* of 1669 (which is Assigned on *April 1st*). And all the *Moveable Feasts* of that whole



'whole Table which precede March 25. are  
'Assigned to the Wrong Year. But it is  
'(from Practice) very manifest, that as  
'well this Table, as that which followeth (to  
'find Easter for ever) do not begin the Year,  
'as the Note directs, at March 25, but Jan. 1.

'All which being duly considered (beside  
'what else of like Nature might be added :)  
'I submit it to Your Lordships Prudence,  
'whether we are not, as to St. Matthias-  
'Day, to be guided by the Unanimous  
'Practice of the whole Western Church (in  
'past and present Ages) as well as in those  
'other Matters of greater Moment, which  
'as much seem to want a Rubrick (as this  
'doth) if Practice, and the Rules generally  
'Receiv'd, be not a sufficient Guide therein :  
'And subscribe my self,

*Your Lordships very humble Servant,*

JOHN WALLIS.

D. Neighbour, You have mightily oblig'd  
me, by Reading to me this *Excellent Piece*.

C. There is still behind a little *Postscript*,  
containing the Rule for Keeping S. Matthias's  
Day in Leap Year, taken from the Cele-  
brated *Vindicator of the Gregorian Stile*,  
Christopher Clavius.

D. Pray, Sir, then read it.

C.

*C. Clavius, Calendar. Roman. Sub Mense Feb.*

‘In *Anno Bissextili Februarius* est dierum  
 ‘29, & Festum Sancti *Matthiae* celebratur  
 ‘25 *Februarij*, & bis dicitur *Sexto Calendas*,  
 ‘& *Litera Dominicalis* quæ assumpta fuerat  
 ‘in Mense *Januario* mutatur in *Præcedentem*;  
 ‘Ut si in *Januario* *Litera Dominicalis* fuerit  
 ‘*A*, mutatur in *Præcedentem* quæ est *G*, &c.  
 ‘Which Passage English’d is as follows:  
 ‘In *Leap Year February* has 29 *Days*, and  
 ‘the *Feast* of St. *Matthias* is kept on *Feb.*  
 ‘25, and the *Sixth of the Calends* is twice  
 ‘nam’d; and the *Dominical Letter*, which  
 ‘was us’d for *January*, is chang’d into that  
 ‘which goes before : As for Instance, if in  
 ‘*January* the *Dominical Letter* was *A*, it is  
 ‘chang’d into that which goes before, which  
 ‘is *G*, &c. After this the Dr. says : ‘The  
 ‘like *Note*, I think, is in the *Roman Bre-*  
 ‘*viary*, and other like Books.

*D.* I heartily thank You for this extraordinary Favour, and the Satisfaction You have given me.

*C.* I am glad of it, I assure You, and shall at any Time be very ready to give You what Satisfaction I can, as to any other *Scruple* You shall propose to me.

*D.* I shall make bold to wait upon You then *another Time*. Sir, I am your Very *Humble Servant*.

*FINIS.*

THE  
True Time of Keeping  
St. Matthias's Day  
IN  
LEAP-YEARS,

Further shewn  
In a *second* familiar Conference be-  
tween a *Church Man* and a *Dissenter*.

Wherein is inserted  
Arch-Bishop *Sancroft's* Order con-  
cerning the Time of Keeping the  
same, *A. D. 1684.* with a *Vindi-*  
*cation* thereof.

To which is added, an  
A P P E N D I X,  
Containing *Collections* out of *Brevia-*  
*ries, Missals,* and other Books on this  
Subject.

---

London: Printed and sold by *J. Downing* in  
*Bartholomew-Close,* *J. Knapton,* *J. Wyat,* *R.*  
*Knaplock,* *J. Bonwick,* *W. Carter,* *H. Clements,*  
and *J. Holland* in *St. Paul's Church-Yard,* and  
*J. Bowyer* and *T. Baker* in *Ludgate-Street.*

---

Price Three Pence.

THE  
True Time of Keeping  
St. Matthias's Day  
IN  
LEAP-YEARS.

Further shown  
In a recent familiar Conference be-  
tween a Church Man and a Dissenter.

Wherein is inserted  
Arch-Bishop Sumner's Order con-  
cerning the Time of Keeping the  
Fasts, A. D. 1824 with a Vindi-  
cation thereof.

To which is added, an  
A B P E N D I X,  
Containing Extracts out of Divine  
and other Books on this  
Subject.

LONDON: Printed and sold by J. Bowring in  
Bath-street, Opp. J. Knapp's, J. Wray, R.  
Knapton, J. Bowring, M. Carter, H. Clement,  
and J. Hildes in St. Paul's Church-yard, and  
J. B. and T. B. in the Strand.



# The PREFACE.

**S**ince, at the Request of a particular Friend, I permitted the Appendix to the Rule for finding *EASTER* in the *Book of Common-Prayer* explain'd and vindicated, to see the *Light* before the *Tract* itself, and since I am upon a more serious and careful observing of the *Calendar* of the present *Book of Common-Prayer* (which, contrary to the *Usage* of this *Church*, before the last *Revision* thereof in 1661, has made the 29th of *February* the *Intercalary Day*, by appointing *Lessons* for it as on other *Days*,) perfectly convinced that we are oblig'd by the *Act of Uniformity*, (which has establish'd the said *Calendar* in the present *Liturgy*,) agreeably to *A. Bp. Sancroft's Order*, to keep it on the 24th, as well in *Common Years* as in *Leap-Years*: I have suffer'd this second Appendix on the same Subject to come out also before the *Tract* itself.

I have no other Aim now in publishing these Collections than I first had in making them, viz. The preventing the like Confusion the next Year, as happen'd in the Year 1708, when some of the *Clergy* relying upon the Authority of the *Oxford Almanack*, kept it on the 25th; and others following the *Calendar*, kept it on the 24th.

I hope I shall not be censur'd for changing my Opinion so soon, since I have therein acted

## The PREFACE.

*in Conformity to the Rules of Honesty and Sincerity; and have made all the haste I could to undeceive, by this second Appendix, such as might probably have been influenced by the Authorities produc'd in my First.*

*Among other Reasons which have retarded the Publication of this Appendix, one was the hope of getting A. Bp. Sancroft's larger Order concerning St. Matthias's Day, which some Friends have told me they have formerly seen hanging up in Churches; but I have not been yet able to procure it, and am inclin'd to think, that that larger Order was no other than The Order of K. Charles II. in Council concerning the fix'd Times, which he had thought fit to appoint for Touching those who had the King's Evil, because one of these Orders which has been communicated to me has this Title, Additional to be affix'd to His Majesties Order in Council, &c.*

*N. B. I have since seen one of these Orders, with the Title of Additional, &c. at the Bottom of the Order of K. Charles II. &c. hanging up in the Parish Church of St. Bartholomew the Less London.*

*I humbly submit what I have here offer'd to the Wisdom of my Superiours, and leave it to their Consideration, whether the Preventing such a Disformity in the keeping this Festival, the next Leap-Year as happen'd the last, may not deserve some Public Order and Direction to the Almanack Makers, as well concerning the placing the Feast of St. Matthias as the Intercalary Day. June 11, 1711.*

THE

T H E

True Time of Keeping  
 St. Matthias's Day,  
 In Leap-Years,

Further shewn in a second familiar Conference  
 between a Church-Man and a Dissenter.

D. **N**eighbour, I am mighty glad I  
 have met with you; I have  
 something to shew you on the  
 Subject of our last Conference, if you are  
 at Leisure.

C. Yes, Sir, with all my Heart; pray,  
 What is it?

D. It is the late Arch-Bishop Sancroft's  
 Order concerning the Keeping St. Matthias's  
 Day, in the Year 1684.

C. Pray, Sir, be pleas'd to step to my  
 House, and oblige me with a Sight of it.

D. Sir, I will follow you.

C. Now,

## II.

C. Now, Sir, let me hear what the *Arch-Bishop* says on this Subject, because it will be of Weight with me, since he was skill'd in this sort of Learning, and (as we are told) (1) was principally concern'd in preparing the *Kalendar*, at the last Revisal of the *Book of Common-Prayer* in 1661.

D. It is as follows :

*All Parsons, Vicars, and Curates, are hereby requir'd to take notice, That the Feast of St. Matthias is to be celebrated (not upon the 25th of February, as the common Almanacks boldly and erroneously set it;) but upon the 24th of February for ever, whether it be Leap Year or not, as the Kalendar in the Liturgie, confirm'd by the Act of Uniformity, appoints and enjoyns.*

*Given at Lambeth House. Febr. 5. A. D. 1683.*

W. Cant.

Now what have you to say to this? You see the good *Arch-Bishop* says expressly, *That the Kalendar in the Liturgie, confirm'd by the Act of Uniformity, appoints and enjoyns St. Matthias's Day to be kept for ever, whether it be Leap-Year or not, on Febr. 24.*

C. I must indeed confess, that upon considering this Point again, since our last

Con-

---

(1) See Mr. *Isaac Walton's* Life of *Bishop Sanderson*, sheet 1. 5.



St. Matthias's Day.

3

*Conference*, I am of Opinion that we are obliged, by virtue of the *Act of Uniformity*, which has establish'd our present *Book of Common-Prayer*, to keep the *Feast of St. Matthias*, as the *Arch-Bishop* says, on *February 24th*, as well in *Leap-Years*, as in *Common Years*: tho' I must freely own to you, that therein we act contrary to *Antient Usage*.

D. Pray, What greater Light have you receiv'd, since our last *Conference*, that you have so chang'd your Opinion as to this Point?

C. The Changing my Opinion, as to this Point, is owing to a careful Observing of the *Kalendar*, in the present *Common-Prayer Book*, which is establish'd by the *Act of Uniformity*, and comparing it with the *Editions* of it before its *Revisal* in 1661.

D. Why, Pray where lies the Difference?

C. It lies in this, that in all the *Editions* of it since 1661, the 29th Day of *February* is mention'd, and *Lessons* appointed to be read, on that as well as on other Days; and for *February 24th*, which in *Common Years*, is indisputably *St. Matthias Day*, there are no *First Lessons* appointed there, but they are to be taken from amongst the *Lessons proper for Holydays*; and for *Februa-*

#### 4 The True Time of Keeping

ry 25th, there are *Lessons* appointed as for other Days; whereas, in all the Editions of the *Common-Prayer-Books* before, its *Revisal* in 1661, there were only 28 Days in *February*, and as I before recited to you, from *Dr. Nichols's* excellent *Comment* on the *Book of Common-Prayer*; (1) there was this *Rubrick* put into the *Book of Common-Prayer*, which was compiled in the *First Year* of the *Reign* of *King Edward VI.* A. D. 1549, and kept in after it was revis'd in 1552, that People might have a *Direction* how to perform *Divine Worship* in the *Month* of *February*, in *Leap-Years*, when that *Month* had a *Day* more than it usually had in *Common Years*.

D. Well, What says this *Rubrick*?

C. It is in these Words: 'This is also to be noted concerning *Leap-Year*, that the 25th of *February*, which, in *Leap-Year* is counted for two Days, alter neither *Psalm* nor *Lesson*, but the same *Psalms* and *Lessons*, which be said the first Day, shall also serve for the second: But, when upon the *Accession* of *Queen Elizabeth* to the *Crown*, the *Book of Common-Prayer* came to be revis'd, another *Rubrick* was substituted in the room of this,

---

(1) See *The True Time of Keeping St. Matthias's Day in Leap Years*, shewn in a *Conference* between a *Church-Man* and a *Dissenter*, p. 6.

which was continued in the several Editions of the Common-Prayer, 'till it was expunged in 1661.

D. Pray, Sir, be so kind as to read it.

C. It is this: 'When the Years of our Lord may be divided into four even Parts, which is every Fourth Year, then the Sunday Letter leapeth, and that Year the Psalms and Lessons, which serve for the 23 Day of February, shall be read again the Day following, except it be Sunday, which hath proper Lessons of the Old Testament, appointed in the Table serving to that Purpose.

D. But pray how comes it to pass that there is so great a difference between these two Rubricks?

C. I will tell you: The Revisers of the Book of Common-Prayer, at the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's Reign, finding that a Mistake was committed in the Rubrick of King Edward's Books, viz. By placing the Intercalary Day wrong, (as Dr. Nichols justly observes in the Note I read to you at our last Conference out of his excellent Comment on the Book of Common-Prayer, (1) viz. between the 24th and 25th of February, thereby making two 24th Days of that Month in Leap Years. I say the Revisers of the Com-

---

(1) See *The True Time of Keeping St. Matthias's Day in Leap-Years.* &c, p. 5.

## 6      *The True Time of Keeping*

*mon-Prayer*, at the beginning of *Queen Elizabeth's* Reign, observing this Mistake in the *Rubrick* of *K. Edward's* Books, corrected it in that, which, as I said before, continued therein till the Year 1661, by placing, as *Dr. Nichols* says, ' *The Intercalary Day* not ' as by *K. Edward's* Books, between the 24th ' and 25th, thereby making two 25ths; but after ' the 23d, and before the 25th, making two 24th ' Days, as the old Romans us'd to do; so that ' (as the *Dr.* adds) this *Rubrick* gives us to un- ' derstand which of these two 24ths, *St. Mat-* ' *thias's* Day is to be observ'd upon; for if the ' Lessons of the 23d were to be read upon the ' first 24th Day in Leap-Year, then that Day ' could not be *St. Matthias's*; for the first Lesson ' appointed for *St. Matthias's* was *Wisdom* ' *XIX.* But the first Lesson for the 23d of *Febr.* ' was *Deut. II.* Therefore, (as the *Dr.* goes ' on) 'tis plain, that according to the old *Com-* ' *mon-Prayer-Book*, *St. Matthias* must not ' be celebrated upon the *Intercalary Day*, or the ' first 24th, but upon the Day after the *Inter-* ' *calary*, that is, the second 24th, or what ' we commonly call the 25th.

*D.* Well, but it seems you are now of another Opinion than *Dr. Nichols* and *Dr. Wallis*, notwithstanding the great Characters you have given them.



C. I am so, 'tis true, and for the Reasons I have given you ; tho', nevertheless, I still think that we act herein contrary to *Antient Usage*.

D. Pray, How came this to pass ? Why is such a *strange Deviation* from *Antient Usage* suffer'd in your *Church*, which you on all Occasions, boast to be so *Primitive* in its *Doctrine, Worship and Discipline* ?

C. I cannot think that this happen'd thro' *Inadvertency*, as Dr. Wallis has suggested, (1) but rather *Designedly*, in condescension to *Vulgar Capacities*.

D. What Reason have you for thinking so ?

C. My Reason is, because those that had the *Revising of the Kalendar* committed to them at *that Time*, were very well skill'd in this sort of Learning, (2) and consequently

(1) See *The Advertisement before his Letter to Bp. Fell*, in the *True Time of keeping St. Matthias's Day in Leap-Years*, &c. p. 9.

(2) N. B. Mr. Isaac Walton in his *Life of Bishop Sanderson*, l. 5. says that A. B. Sancroft was principally concern'd in *Revising the Calendar*, and his Knowledge in this sort of Learning, is too evident to be insisted on: The other was Dr. Pell, who has sufficiently shewn to the *World* his skill in *Mathematical and Calendar Learning*, by his *Idea of Mathematics*, containing an Account of *Geometry, Algebra, Arithmetic, and Logarithmotechny* [ in the *Philosophical Collections*, No. 5. p. 22. ] and the *Vindication there- of*

## 8 *The True Time of Keeping*

quently were very well appriz'd of this Deviation at that Time.

D. I know not how well they were skill'd in this sort of Learning, but I am sure there are many Mistakes in the *Kalendar*,

---

of against the Exceptions of Mercennus, *ibid.* p. 137. See Mr. Lowthorp's *Abridgment of the Philosophical Transactions*, Vol. 1. p. 1. &c.] and the *Introduction to Algebra*, Translated out of High Dutch into English, by Tho. Branker, M. A. much alter'd and amended by him, with the Addition of, *A Table of such odd Numbers as are less than One Hundred Thousand*, shewing those that are impos'd, and resolving the rest into their Factor or Coefficient. [See Lowthorp's *Abridgment of the Philosoph. Transact.* Vol. 1. p. 117. No. 12.] but especially by that ingenious Tract of his entitled, *Easter not mistim'd; A Letter written out of the Country to a Friend in London, concerning Easter Day*, 4to. 1664, when the Rule was first accus'd of being False. As to Dr. Pell's concern in Revising the Calendar in 1661. take this following Passage out of the Register of the Convocation then assembled, publish'd in *Synodus Anglicana*, p. 89. Sessio XXXVII. *Die Jovis, 5. die Mensis Decembris inter Horas 8 & 10 ante Meridiem ejus diei, &c. Magister Pell introduxit Calendarium Libro publicarum Precum annexendum, & post Inspectionem ejusdem dictus Reverendus Pater Præsident antedictus de & cum Consensu Confratrum suorum retulit, & commisit Examinationem & Revisionem ejusdem Domino Episcopo Carliolen.* For a further Proof of A. B. Sancroft's and Dr. Pell's Knowledge in the Calendar Learning, it may be observ'd, that they were both Chaplains at that Time to the Learned Dr. Cosin, Bp. of Durham, whose

der, and especially in the placing the *Golden Numbers*, of which Dr. Wallis, in his Letter to Bp. Fell, has given several remarkable Instances. (1)

C. I grant there are so; but yet this does not prove that the *Revisers* of the *Calendar* were not skill'd in this sort of Learning; because the *Mistakes* that are there, are probably most of them the *Printers Mistakes*, who have extremely deviated from the *Original Copy* of the *Book of Common-Prayer* in the late Editions of it, as I cou'd shew you by abundance of Instances; and even Dr. Wallis

C

owns

---

whose Skill in this Way must be granted by any one that looks into his *Devotions*, and more especially his Learned *Traët on the Liturgy*, which Dr. Nichols has lately publish'd, at the end of his *Comment on the Book of Common-Prayer*; from his assisting as he did, not only in this *Convocation*, but even at the *Savoy Conference*, and Mr. Baxter has given a sufficient Commendation of him on this Account, [See *Baxter's Life*, fol. p. and *Calamy's Abridgment of it*, p. ] It must be consider'd further, that the *Tables and Rules for Moveable and Immoveable Feasts*, together with the *Days of Fasting and Abstinence thro' the whole Year*, were inserted into the *Liturgy* then from his *Devotions*. As to the Bp. of Carlisle, Dr. Stern, afterwards A. B. of York, his Skill this Way, I cannot as yet give any particular proof.

(1) See *The True Time of Keeping St. Matthias's Day in Leap-Years, &c.* p. 36.

10      *The True Time of Keeping*

owns as much; and as to the *Mistakes*, that are in the *Original Copy*; they are not of any great Moment, so that we may truly say of our present *Book of Common-Prayer*, as the *Preface* of it says of the former one, before the *Revisal* thereof, viz. 'That it does  
'not contain in it any thing contrary to the Word  
'of God, or to sound Doctrine. or which a Godly  
'Man may not with a good Conscience submit  
'unto, or which is not fairly defensible against  
'any that shall oppose the same, if it shall be  
'allow'd such just and favourable Construction,  
'as in common Equity ought to be allow'd to all  
'*Humane Writings*.

---

APPEN-



## APPENDIX.

**I** Have rather chose to give the following Testimonies here altogether, than to mention them in the Conference :

1. *Micrologus*, an antient Writer of Church-Affairs in the XI. Century, in his Treatise de Ecclesiasticis Observationibus, c. 47. in the *Magna Bibliotheca Patrum veterum*, fol. Paris 1654. Tom. X. p. 159. has this Passage : *In Biffextili Anno Nativitatem S. Matthiae Apostoli colimus in illâ die, quæ Vigiliam ejus proximè sequitur, non in alterâ quæ propter Biffextum eo Anno in eodem Calendario iteratur.*

This Rubrick seems to appoint St Matthias's Day to be kept in Leap-Years on Febr. 24. agreeable to that of the 1 and 2 Book of Edward VI. tho' the Roman Church seem always to appoint it on the 25th.

2. *Gulielmus Durandus* in his *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum cum Notis Johannis Belethi*, 4to. Venet. 1599. Lib VIII. Cap. 3. having in Sect. 17. shewn the nature of the Biffextile, proceeds in Sect. 18. to shew how it must be plac'd in the Calendar. His words are as follows : *In quo loco Calendarij poni debeat illa Dies, his versibus continetur.*

*Biffextum Sexta Martis tenuere Calende.*

*Posteriore Die celebrantur festa Mathiae.*

hoc est dicere quod in illâ Literâ ubi dicitur in Calendario 6 Calen. Martij debet poni Dies Bissextilis, & tunc stamus sive sedemus duobus diebus super illa litera, & festum Sancti Mathai [Mathie] quod deberet illâ die celebrari, celebratur tantum in sequenti: ita tamen quod inter ipsum Festum & vigiliam nullum sit medium [extra de verborum signi. quæsit; non interest tamen utrum ipsum festum in prima vel in secunda die prædictarum duarum celebretur. sed Regionis in hoc consuetudo servetur.

This Durandus was a celebrated Ecclesiastical Writer in the XIII. Century, born at Puimoisson in the Diocese of Riez in Provence, and wrote several Learned Treatises in the Civil Law: [See Morery's Dictionary.]

This Reference of *Extra de Verborum Signi. quæsit*, denotes the *Extravagantes*, which are some Additionals to Pope Clement the Fifths Decretals, publish'd in the *Corpus Juris Canonici*, so called, because not being digested into Order, they were not accounted part of the Canon Law, tho' they were permitted to be printed with it, and this is the first Book in which I have met with these Verses, which are very positive and express as to the Time of Keeping St. Matthias's Day in Leap-Years; and I have found 'em frequently cited on this Subject as in the *Preces Privatae*: Sir George Whartons's *Almanack for the Year 1660*. Mr. Booker's *Tractatus Paschalis*: The Julian and Gregorian Year, or the difference betwixt the Old and New Stile, &c.

3. In the *Portiforium seu Breviarium ad Usus Ecclesia Sarisburiensis*, &c. 2 Vol. 4to Lond. 1555. in the Calendar before the 2d

Vol.

Vol. in which the Golden Numbers are plac'd in the same Order as in ours, and against f. VI. Cal. [which is Febr. 24.] *Matthij Apostoli.* is this Note: *Si Bissextus fuerit, Quartâ Die a Cathedrâ Sancti Petri inclusive fiat Festum Sancti Mathia & F. Litera bis numeretur.*

It is plain, that by *this Rule*, (which Dr. Nichols says is laid down in all the old *Missals secundum Usus Sarum*, which were us'd here in England before the Reformation.) *St. Matthias's Day* was appointed to be kept on Febr. 25th in Leap-Years, the *Cathedra Sancti Petri* being set in all the Calendars of the *Missals*, &c. that I have seen, against the VIII Cal. and the Letter D (or the 22d Day) as it is particularly in that which is at the end of the *Kalendarium Gregorianum Perpetuum*, publish'd by Order of Pope Gregory XIII. and printed at Paris in 1583. 8vo with the Priviledge of the said Pope Gregory XIII. and Henry III. King of France.

4. In a Calendar at the end of the *Kalendarium Gregorianum Perpetuum* mention'd above, which has 6 Columns, viz. 1. of *E-pacts*, 2. *Dominical Letters*, 3. *Kalends*, &c. 4. *Days of the Month*, 5. *Saints Names*; at the bottom of February is this Rubrick in Red: *In Anno Bissextili Februarius est dierum 29 & festum S. Matthiæ celebratur 25 Februarij, & bis dicitur sexto Kalendas, id est die 24 & die 25, & Litera Dominicalis quæ Assumpta fuit*

*fuit in Mense Januario, mutatur in Præcedentem quæ est. g. & cæ.*

The same Rubrick is in 4 Missals, which I have seen Printed at Antwerp in 1585, 1631 and 1695. 4to. and 1657, 8vo and a Breviary in French a Paris 1668. 8vo. and clearly shews Pope Gregory's Sense on this Point.

5. In the *Preces Privorata, in Studiosum Gratiæ collectæ & Regia Autoritate approbatæ & quibusdam in locis etiam auctæ*, 1573. 160. when mention is made of an Intercalated Day every 4th Year, 'tis added, *Qui dies ita inferendus est in Anno Bissextili ut in fine Mensis Feb. viz. 60 Cal. J. bis numeretur: Quâ Ratione singulis Annis Bissextilibus Feb. uno die augetur: Et tum quidem prima ex duabus illius Anni Literis Dominicalibus servit usque ad Diem 24 Feb. secunda verò inde usq; ad Anni Finem.* And soon after follow these Verses :

*Bissextum Sextæ Martis tenuere Calendæ,  
Posteriore Die celebrantur Festa Mathiæ.*

This was publish'd at the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's Reign, for the Use of Young Students; and as an Improvement of the Orarium, publish'd in the Reign of K. Henry VII.

6. In a Primer or Office of the blessed Virgin Mary in Latin and English, 120 Antwerp, 1599. at the bottom of February is this Rubrick. *When it is Leap-Year February*  
bath



hath 29 Days, and the Feast of St. Matthias is celebrated the 25th Day, and then the Dominical Letter, which began to be used in January, is changed into the Letter next going before; as if in January the Dominical Letter were A, it is changed into the Letter next before, which is G; and at the latter end, amongst the Hymns there are these Words: *The Ana* [viz. *Antiphona*,] or *Anthem* on the Feast of St. Matthias the Apostle, on the 24th or 25th of February, which plainly shews that in Leap-Years it was to be kept on the 25th.

7. In a *Missal* 4to *Antwerp* 1631. in some *Rubricks* before the *Calendar* relating to the *Dominical Letter*, after it is said, If there be but one, it is a *Common Year*; and if two, a *Bissextile*: It is added, & *tunc superior Litera Dominicam Diem ostendet in Kalendario a principio Anni usq; ad Festum S. Mathia Apostoli: inferior autem ab hoc Festo usq; ad finem Anni.* And afterwards speaking of the Method of finding out the *Moveable Feasts*, it is said, *Sive antiquâ sive novâ Tabulâ Paschali utemur, inveniendâ sunt omnia Festa Mobilia in annis Bissextilibus per Literam Dominicalem Posterio-  
quam nimirum currit post Festum S. Mathia Apostoli, ne scilicet ambigamus utra duarum literarum pro hoc aut illo Festo indagando accipi-  
enda*

enda sit ita tamen ut Septuagesima & Diei Cinerum inventa in Januario aut Februario addatur unus Dies, Quod ideo fit quia ante Diem S. Matthiae currit prior Litera Dominicalis quae in Calendario Posteriores semper sequitur: post Festum autem S. Matthiae in Februario licet posterior Littera currat additur tamen tunc dies intercalaris, ita ut dies 24 Februarii dicatur 25, & dies 25 dicatur 26 &c.

The same Rubrick is in a *Breviarium Romanum*, 2 Vol. 8vo Paris 1636. & Antwerp 4to 1615 and 1625.

8. Dr. Mocket in his *Doctrina & Politia Ecclesiae Anglicanae*, &c. 4to 1617. in pag. 161. which bears the Title of *De Anno & Partibus ejus* says, *Quare in Anno Quarto legendum est in Fine Mensis Februarii, videlicet 25 die in Sede Litera J. bis Mat. Mat. ut sextus dies Calendarum [inde Nomen Anno Bissexti vel Bissextili] bis nominetur, propter diem illum Quarto quoque Anno ibidem inserendum; unde prima ex duabus illius Anni Literis Dom. servit ad Diem 24 Feb: secunda ad Anni Finem.*

This Dr. Mocket was Warden of *All Souls Coll.* in the University of Oxford, and Chaplain to A. Bp. Abbot, by whose Countenance and Encouragement he published this *Politia*, which, (as Dr. Heylin says) in

in his *Cyprianus Anglicus, or Life of A. B. Laud*, pag. 70. *Ann. Dom. 1617.* (tho' it was soon after Burne for Reasons which the Dr. there gives) was publish'd in a pious Zeal, for gaining Honour to the Church of England among Foreign Nations, and (as the Dr. owns) did give no small Reputation to it beyond the Seas. This *Politia* contains the Liturgy of the Church of England, the Publick Catechisms, the Thirty Nine Articles, the Book of Ordination of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, and many Doctrinal Points, extracted out of the Book of Homilies; together with Bp. Jewels's Apology, Dean Nowel's Catechism, and his own *Politia*, which was afterwards reprinted in 8vo. with some Pieces writ by Dr. Zouch.

9. In a *Common-Prayer-Book* in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, printed in fol. 1627. Lond. in which the Golden Numbers are plac'd in a different Manner than usually, viz. 4 Days higher as in March, XIX. is set against the 1 Day, VIII. against 2, XVI. against 4, &c. as they are in the *Common-Prayer for the Use of the Church of Scotland*, fol. 1637. there is this Note in Writing at the Bottom of the Month of February. 'In the Leap-Year the Increasing Day is put into February, between the 23d and 24th Day: For St. Matthias Day is always accounted the Sixth Day before the Cal. of March, and by this means St. Matthias's Day is made the 25th Day of Febr. in a Leap-Year.

D 10. George

10. George Meriton, *Gent.* in his *Nomenclatura Clericalis*, or, *The Young Clerk's Vocabulary*, 8vo. 1685. in Sect. 5. amongst the *Feast Days*, making mention of *St. Matthias's Day*, adds, *This is always the 24th Day of February, unless it be Leap-Year, and then it is the Five and Twentieth.*

11. Mr. Booker in his *Traſſatus Paſchalis*, or, *A Diſcourſe concerning the Holy Feaſt of Eaſter ; its Original, with Rules and Tables for the finding thereof, with the other Moveable Feaſts throughout the Year, in both Accompts, viz. according to the Engliſh Accompt, or the Old Stile, and the Roman, Gregorian, or New-Stile, uſed in Foreign Parts for ever*, 8vo. 1664. p. 12, 13. ſpeaking of the ſupernumerary 6 Hours, which *Julius Caſar* obſerv'd in the Year, which every 4th Year made a Day, ſays, that he added it to February, becauſe it is the ſhorteſt Month, and according to the Ancients, and our Church Accompt, the laſt Month, and this Day is put in the 25th of February, in the Leap-Year, or every 4th Year, and from thence the Hebdomatical or Week-Day Letters receive a Change ; and the Letter *F* is twice repeated, and *St. Matthias Day* is obſerv'd on the latter *F*, whereas, in the Common Year, it is on the 24th of February, againſt which the Letter *F* always ſtands in the Calendar. To  
which



which purpose there is an old Verse: *Bissex-*  
*tum Sextæ, &c.* [cited as above in Sect. 2.  
 in the Extract from *Durandus*] so that  
 we may observe the Julian Year is two-fold,  
 Common of 365 Days and Bissextile or Leap  
 Year of 366 Days, and it is called Bissextile  
 of Bis and Sex, because the Sixth Calends of  
 March is twice repeated, and this 6th Ca-  
 lends of March, is always the 25th Day of  
 February; and in the Leap-Year, the 24th  
 and 25th Day of February are counted but  
 as one Day, viz. the 6th Calends of March,  
 and the Dominical Letter, which was in  
 January and all February before that Day,  
 is changed into the preceding Alphabetical  
 Letter, as this Year 1664 being Leap Year,  
 the Dominical Letter in the English Account  
 in January was C, and so is all January and  
 February; but the next Sunday after St.  
 Matthias's Day being the 28th of February  
 it is changed into B, and so serves for Sun-  
 day Letter all the Year following; and yet  
 the Letter A ends the Year and begins the  
 Year, and thus it doth every Year: So then  
 February may be call'd *Mensis Intercalaris*,  
 and the 25th Day thereof *Dies Intercalaris*.

12. Mr. Collier in his *Historical Dictio-*  
*nary* in the Article *Calendar*, speaking of the  
*Bissextile*, says, *The Intercalary Day was to be*  
*inserted in the Month of February, after the*

24th of that Month, which the Romans, according to their way of Counting, call'd the 6th of the Calends, and hence came the Word Bissextile, because they said twice Sexto Calendas; and in his Supplement, under the Article Bissextile, he more largely explains himself, saying, That Julius Cæsar having observ'd that the Sun perform'd his Annual Revolution in 365 Days and 6 Hours or thereabouts, he order'd a Day to be added every Fourth Year, calling it by the Name of Bissextilis, because that Year there was Dies Bis-sextilis, i. e. The Sixth of the Calends of March were twice reckon'd, or put upon two Days together: First, by computing backwards, for the Four and Twentieth of February, which was then the Five and Twentieth, and the second Time for the Day thrown in, which was then the Four and Twentieth. This Intercalary Day was clap'd in just after the Twenty Third of February, upon which they kept the Holy-Day of their Terminalia.

13. Basil Kennet in his *Roman Antiquities*, Part II. Ch. IX. speaking of Julius Cæsar's altering the Calendar, says that as to the 6 Hours, he order'd them to be let alone till they made up a whole Day, and to every 4th Year he put in the same Place where the Month us'd to be inserted before [See Censorin, cap. 10.] and that was just 5 Days before the End

of February, or next before the Sixth of the Calends of March.

14. The Author of the Julian and Gregorian Year, or the difference betwixt the Old and New Stile, shewing that the Reformed Churches should not alter their Old Stile, but that the Romanists should return to it, 4to. 1700. says thus in page 1. The Julian Year consisted of 365 Days and 6 Hours; but because of the inconvenience of Inserting of Six Hours at the End of every Year, they were order'd to be reserv'd to the End of 4 Years, when they came to a whole Day, and then to be inserted at the 24th Day of February. For the Old Roman Year ended at Feb. 23, on which was observ'd the Feast of Terminus, and the Old Intercalary Month was always inserted at that Time: And because the Intercalary Days, (according to the Method of the Egyptians) were never accounted any part of the Month or Year, but only an Appendix to them, and Cato in Tit. Dig. ll. 98. expressly says of the Practice of the Romans, *Mensem Intercalarem addititium esse, omnesque ejus dies pro momento temporis observandos*: Therefore the Romans in the Julian Year, accounted the 24th Day of February, that is, the 6th of the Calends of March two Days together, which is the Reason that in our Calendar, Leap-Year is called *Bissex-*  
tile,

tile, or the Year in which the 6th of the Calends of March came twice over, or was continued for 2 Years together: We in England having been very antiently Subjects of the Roman Empire receiv'd the Julian Account; and pursuant to the Method of the Romans, our Parliament in the 2<sup>d</sup> Year of Henry the III. pass'd an Act, that in every Leap-Year those Days at the 24th of February should be accounted but for one, [N. B. 'This Act may be seen in the Preface to The True Time of Keeping St. Matthias's Day in Leap-Years; and the Reader is desir'd to take Notice, that in the last Line but 8 Year is printed for Day, it being so by a Mistake in Keble.] Now, because in the Western-Church, the Feast of Matthias hath been very antiently kept on the 24th Day of February, and there might a doubt arise about the true Day of this Feast in Leap-Year; the Rule that had been observ'd in that Matter, was to keep it on the second of these two Days in Leap-Year, according to the Old Verse:

*Posteriore die Festum Celebrato Mathia.*

And on the second Day we also kept it in England, till a few Years since it was alter'd by an Injunction of a late Arch-Bishop,  
[viz.



[viz. A. B. Sancroft] who thought it not so agreeable to the last Act of Uniformity.

15. The Author of the *Clergy-Man's Vade Mecum*, 3d Edit. 8vo 1709. Ch. 22. p. 197. says, That ~~Pope Gregory~~ order'd the Intercalary Day the 29th of February, to be omitted at the end of the ensuing Centuries, and to be retain'd at the begining of the 4th. And by way of Note on February 29th he says, 'Tis true according to the old Roman Calculation, the 25th was look'd upon as the Intercalary Day; and from thence the Leap-Year was call'd Bissextile, viz. because there were two Days call'd the 6th Day of the Cal. of March; the 24th was Sextus Calendarum, the 25th Bissextus. Some have supposed that therefore every Leap-Year the Feast of St. Matthias, who was as it were intercalated among the Apostles, is to be observed on the old Intercalary Day, viz. the 25th. Some Almanack Makers do so place it; but I remember that A. Bp. Sancroft publish'd his Rescript against them for this Practice, A. D. 1684. declaring that the Feast of St. Matthias was always to be kept on the 24th.

16. In Mons. Morery's *Dictionnaire Historique* par Mons. Vaultrier, 4 Vol. fol. a Paris, 1707. the Article *Bissextile*, is as follows: *Jour Intercalaire que l'on ajoute*  
de

de quatre ans en quatre ans, pour accorder l'année civile avec le cours du Soleil. Jules Cæsar en fut l'inventeur : car ayant observé que le Soleil achevoit son cours naturel ou annuel en 365 jours & 6 heures ou environ, il fit ajouter un jour à chaque quatrième année, à laquelle on donna le nom de Bissextes des deux mots Latins bis sexto, parce que les Romains dans leur manière de compter les Jours comptoit deux fois Sexto Calendas Martias, La première fois en retrogradant pour le 24 de Février qui devient alors le 25 & la seconde fois pour le jour inséré qui fait le 24. On donnoit place à ce jour intercalaire après le 23 Février, qui étoit le Fete des Terminales. And under the Article Calendrier, speaking of Sossigenes's reforming it by the appointment of Julius Caesar, he adds, Qui après avoir composé le Calendrier de 365 jours laissa les six heures pour en faire un jour au bout de 4 ans qui seroit ajouté dans le Mois de Février avant le 24 jour de ce Mois que les Romains appelloit le Sixième des Calendes selon leur Manière de Compter, d'ou est venu le Nom. de Bissextes parce qu' alors on disoit deux fois Sexto Calendas ou Bis Sexto.

17. Bp. Beveridge in his *Institutiones Chronologicae*, Lib. 1. cap. 9. speaking of the Intercalated Day every 4th Year, says, Dies iste intercalaris eodem in loco inserendus

finis

fuit quo *Adensis* in *Anno Pompitiano*, viz. post *Terminalia* sive Feb. 23. *Caterum Februarij* 23. est septimus *Kalendas Martij* & Feb. 24. *Sextus Kal. Martij*, hinc est quod anno intercalari *Sextus Kal.* bis numeretur unde non dies tantum ipse, sed & totus annus *Bissextilis* nominatur.

18. *Monsr. Blondel*, Royal Professor of the *Mathematicks and Architecture*, a Member of the *Royal Academy of Sciences*, *Camp-Marshal* to the *King's Army*, and formerly Teacher of the *Mathematicks* to the *Dauphin* of *FRANCE* in his *Histoire du Calendrier Romain*, 8vo a *Amsterdam*, 1710. *Livre III. c. III.* speaking of *Julius Caesar's* Regulating the Calendar, says, *Et parce qu' il passoit alors pour constant parmi les Astronomes, que la duree annuelle du Cours du Soleil estoit precisement de 365 jours & 6 heures, il se resolut de donner tout le tems de 365 jours a l' année de son Calendrier, laissant les heures jusqu' a ce qu' au bout de 4 ans elles fissent un jour entier pour etre alors ajouté aux autres par intercalation ; de sorte que cette quatrième année fut non pas de 365 jours comme les trois autres, qu' il appelloit communes mais bien de 366 jours. Et comme par la premiere Institution. de Numa Pompilius l' Intercalation du Mois merce donius se faisoit vers la fin du Mois de Fevrier ; ce meme Sosigenes. ne*

E

voulant

voulant pas faire un si grand Changement en toutes les Choses prit par l'ordre de l'Empereur le meme tems pour l'Intercalation de ce jour qui tomboit en celui qu'ils appelloit Regifugium. parce que les Romains avoit autrefois chassé leurs Rois hors de Rome au meme jour, & qui suit une autre Fete appelée Terminalia c'est à dire au vint quatrième de Fevrier, ou, pour parler à la manière des Romains au VI. des Calendes de Mars. & parce que ce jour s'appelloit le Second VI. des Calendes que l'on dit Bissextus en Latin il est aisé de voir que c'est de là que l'année dans laquelle se faisoit cette Intercalation, fut appelée Bissextile, Bissextile, ou Intercalaire.

19. Bartholomæus Gavantus in his *Thesaurus Sacrorum Rituum seu Commentaria in Rubricas Missalis & Breviarij Romani*, Antw. 1634. 4to. Tom 2. Sect. VII. Chap. 4. Part 23. p. 144. where mention is made of the *Vigilia S. Matthie*, it is said, *In Anno Bissextili in lectione Martyrologij transfertur Pronuntiatio hujus Vigilia & Festi Sequentis: uti dicitur in eodem Martyrologio*: And in the next Paragraph, where there is an Account of St. Matthias's Day, it is said, *Quod autem in Bissextili Anno fiat Officium die sequenti* 25 Alexander III. præcepit. [de Verb. Signific. cap. 14.]

From



From the afore-mention'd *Collections* it evidently appears, that the *Antient Romans* plac'd their *Bissextile* or *Intercalary Day* just after the 23d Day of *February*, as did the *Church of Rome*, both before and since the *Council of Trent*, and the *Church of England* both before and since the *Reformation*, till the *Revision* of the *Book of Common-Prayer* in 1661, as I have shewn in the *Conference*.

By reason of this *Intercalary Day* the *Dominical Letter* was of course to be alter'd, (as it is expressly said in the preceeding *Collections*) and the *Letter JF*. (that is the *Letter* which in *Common Years* serves for the 24th Day) was in *Leap-Years* to be doubled; but the *Blundering Almanack-Makers* have for the generality shewn but very little *Regard* to these *Rules*, especially the celebrated *Mr. Partridge*, who in his *Almanack* for the Year 1692. has doubled the *Letter A*. at *February 26* and *27*; in that for 1704. the *Letter G*. at *February 25* and *26*; and in that for 1708. the *Letter D* at *February 29* and *March 1*.

If it be objected, that by our present *Constitution*, we do unnecessarily vary in this *Point* from *Antient Usage*, we may urge by *Way of Apology* the *Authority of Micrologus*, who plainly appoints it to be kept on the 24th.

24th. and the Practice of the *Greek Church*, which keeps *St. Matthias's Day* on *August 9*, which is a far greater Variation, and a *very small degree of Necessity* is sufficient for a *deviation* in so small a Matter, which in this last there really was, *viz.* That it was entirely needless to trouble the People with a *new Rubric*, or even to continue an old one for a *Nicety* of so small moment.

F I N I S.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

THE READER is desired to fill up with his Pen the Three Gaps in the *Note* to Page 9 of *this Conference*, left thro' haste; the first with 1695. the second with 383. and the third with 171.

*Lately Published by the same Author.*

The Lawfulness and Right Manner of Keeping *Christmass*, price 3 d.

The Rule for finding *Easter* in the Book of *Common-Prayer* Explain'd. Recommended as proper to be Bound with *Common Prayer Books*, price a Half-penny, or 3 s. per 100.

The Duty and Manner of Propagating the Gospel; shewn in a Sermon Preach'd at the Parish Church of *St. Martin Outwich*, and *Poplar-Chapel*, on *May 27, 1711.* (being *Trinity-Sunday*) on the Reading the *Queen's* and *Bishop of London's* Letters, requiring a Collection to be made the Week following, in the several Parishes within the *Bills of Mortality*, for the Use of the Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts, price 3 d.